

An Early-Eighteenth-Century
Hmayil
(Armenian Prayer Scroll)

Introduction, Facsimile,
Transcription and
Annotated Translation

by

Matthew J. Sarkisian

Edited and
With a Foreword by
Jesse S. Arlen

Sources from the
Armenian Christian Tradition

• Volume 1 •

Qohraway

Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center



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Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center

Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern)
630 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10016

Armenian studies in the heart of the Armenian Diocese

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Holy Father, sanctify me. Holy Son, protect me. Holy Spirit, purify me. Spirit of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, give me to drink. Water of the side of Christ, wash me. Cross of Christ, protect me.

Oh! good Jesus hear me—do not push me away from you, and do not abandon me. Protect me from the deception of the evil one. Call me at the hour of death. Place me next to you with your angels. And from all evil protect this servant of yours. (*Hmayil*, Part 10.)

Raniuth, Raphael, Raten, Hamatoun, and Hamakez, who are angelic attendants of God, you bind and muzzle every evil eye and evil desire and evil thought. Let the bindings and enchantments against this servant of God be obstructed. They intend evil—the evil eye to the evil thorn, the thorn to the caustic fire, the caustic fire to the stone, the stone to the bottomless sea—and every evil eye and evil desire and evil tongue and evil thought and evil sentiment against this servant of God turns to particle and darkness. (*Hmayil*, Part 13.)

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Foreword

Նման է արքայութիւն երկնից հատոյ մանանխոյ, զոր առեալ մարդոյ՝ սերման-
եաց յագարակի իւրում: Որ փոքր է քան զամենայն սերմանիս, եւ յորժամ աճիցէ,
մեծ է քան զամենայն բանջարս, եւ լինի ծառ՝ մինչեւ զալ թռչնոց երկնից եւ
հանգչել յոսոս նորա:

— Աւետարան ըստ Մատթեոսի ԺԳ.31-32

* * *

On April 14, 2021, I introduced this *hmayil* near the end of an online Classical Armenian reading group organized through the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center known as “Krapar yev Kini,” in order to show an example of the popular reception down the centuries of St. Nersēs Shnorhali’s prayer of twenty-four stanzas. Hardly could I have imagined then the large tree into which that small mustard seed would grow in just over a year and a half.

The *hmayil*—Library of Congress’ Armenian Prayer Scroll no. 1, printed in 1727 in Constantinople and masterfully hand-colored later—was not on the screen for more than fifteen minutes, but that was a long enough time to capture the interest of one of the newest members of the group, Matthew J. Sarkisian, a partner in a family construction business in Binghamton, NY, and an amateur—in the best and truest sense of the word: *amator*, one who pursues an interest motivated by love rather than any utilitarian motive—of Classical Armenian, who taught himself the language through online resources and hard work.

A few weeks later, I received an email from Matt in which he said that he was looking at the prayer scroll a little more, was thinking of translating a prayer or two, and could I answer a couple questions he had about some of the language and content in the scroll. That was the beginning of what became a year-and-a-half-long collaboration—the fruits of which you now have before you—in which he studied, translated, and commented on the contents of the *hmayil* from start to finish and I periodically answered questions and offered advice.

My role in this collaboration was limited to that of guide and editor, who recommended studies, resources, and references, provided assistance on grammatical questions, edited the translation, and offered critical feedback on how to understand the purpose and nature of the prayer scrolls and their place in early modern Armenian society, a topic about which much further investigation is still needed and many questions remain open.

While Frédéric Feydit’s 1986 publication, *Amulettes de l’Arménie chrétienne*, provided the Armenian original and French translation of most of the texts found in the prayer scrolls located in the manuscript library of the Mekhitarist congregation at San Lazzaro in Venice, the present publication is the first to my knowledge that provides a full facsimile, transcription, and translation of a single *hmayil*, allowing the reader to virtually “scroll” through from beginning to end, reading this fascinating artifact in a way that approximates the experience of encountering and unrolling one in person. It seems significant that this achievement is thanks not to a professional scholar of Armenology, but to the work of a devoted layman of the Armenian Church.

In Academia, much has been made in recent years of the idea of community outreach and engagement. Usually, this is understood in a top-down fashion, in which the academic descends from the ivory tower in order to present his or her research and knowledge in a form that can be

Foreword

more easily digested by the interested public than that in which academics typically write and publish for one another.

But here is an example of something else, an altogether different way of community engagement, one in which the community member is not simply the passive receiver of knowledge, but an empowered producer of knowledge, in synergetic relation with the academic. It was my honor to fulfill this role for Matthew Sarkisian, and observe month by month the growth of the small mustard seed into a large and beautiful tree, upon whose branches the birds of the sky are now invited to come and perch.

Աստուած վայելունն տալէ...

Jesse Siragan Arlen

October 23, 2022

Գիւտ Սրբոյ Խաչին

Feast of the Discovery of the Holy Cross

Table of Transliteration

Library of Congress System

ᠤ ᠤ	ᠡ ᠡ	ᠢ ᠢ	ᠣ ᠣ	ᠤ ᠤ	ᠥ ᠥ	ᠦ ᠦ	ᠨ ᠨ
A a	B b	G g	D d	E e	Z z	Ē ē	Ė ė
ᠬᠡ ᠬᠡ	ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠬᠡ ᠬᠡ	ᠯᠡ ᠯᠡ	ᠬᠡ ᠬᠡ	ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠬᠡ ᠬᠡ	ᠬᠡ ᠬᠡ
T' t'	Zh zh	I i	L l	Kh kh	Ts ts	K k	H h
ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠨᠡ ᠨᠡ	ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠤ ᠤ	ᠰᠡ ᠰᠡ	ᠮᠡ ᠮᠡ	ᠰᠡ ᠰᠡ	ᠨᠡ ᠨᠡ
Dz dz	Gg gh	Ch ch	M m	Y y	N n	Sh sh	O o
ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠨᠡ ᠨᠡ	ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠨᠡ ᠨᠡ	ᠤ ᠤ	ᠮᠡ ᠮᠡ	ᠰᠡ ᠰᠡ	ᠨᠡ ᠨᠡ
Ch' ch'	P p	J j	ᠷᠡ ᠷᠡ	S s	V v	T t	R r
ᠰᠡ ᠰᠡ	ᠬᠡ ᠬᠡ	ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠬᠡ ᠬᠡ	ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠨᠡ ᠨᠡ	ᠬᠡ ᠬᠡ
Ts' ts'	W w	P' p'	K' k'	ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠳᠡ ᠳᠡ	ᠨᠡ ᠨᠡ	ew

Numbers

ᠤ 1	ᠳᠡ 10	ᠳᠡ 100	ᠨᠡ 1,000
ᠡ 2	ᠬᠡ 20	ᠤ 200	ᠤ 2,000
ᠢ 3	ᠯᠡ 30	ᠰᠡ 300	ᠮᠡ 3,000
ᠣ 4	ᠬᠡ 40	ᠮᠡ 400	ᠰᠡ 4,000
ᠤ 5	ᠳᠡ 50	ᠳᠡ 500	ᠨᠡ 5,000
ᠥ 6	ᠬᠡ 60	ᠨᠡ 600	ᠰᠡ 6,000
ᠦ 7	ᠬᠡ 70	ᠳᠡ 700	ᠬᠡ 7,000
ᠨᠡ 8	ᠳᠡ 80	ᠨᠡ 800	ᠳᠡ 8,000
ᠬᠡ 9	ᠨᠡ 90	ᠳᠡ 900	ᠬᠡ 9,000

Introduction

Hmayils¹

A *hmayil* (հմայիլ, pronounced *hum-eye-eel*) is a scroll containing prayers, supplications, Psalms, Gospel passages, *sharakans* (hymns), and incantations.² They were typically only a few inches wide, yet could be over thirty feet in length. When rolled up, hmayils were placed in small cloth cases and carried (or even worn) by Armenians for protection during the Early Modern period (*ca.* fifteenth to nineteenth centuries).



Five hmayils in the possession of the Zohrab Information Center, two of which are shown with their cloth cases.

According to James R. Russell, Emeritus Professor of Armenian Studies at Harvard University, the word *hmayil* is derived from Arabic *ḥamāyil*, the broken plural of *ḥamīla* (Russell 2021: 144). Following Acharean's etymological dictionary, Dr. Davit Ghazaryan, senior researcher at the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts in Yerevan (commonly known as the Matenadaran), contends that its source is the Pahlavi (Middle Persian) word *humav*, 'blessed' (Ghazaryan 2015: 116). However, Andrzej Pisowicz, Emeritus Professor at the Institute of Oriental Philology,

¹ I first became aware of hmayils in general, and this one in particular, when it was presented by Dr. Jesse S. Arlen during his April 2021 discussion-group session of "Krapar yev Kini", an informal educational program of the Zohrab Information Center, which seeks to expose the public to some of the vast corpus of literary treasures written in Classical Armenian (*grabar* [գրաբար]; *krapar* in Western Armenian). The hmayil immediately intrigued me, and I thought it would be an interesting project to translate it in its entirety, but because of my limited abilities at the time, I was not up to the challenge. My translating skills increased over the following months, in part due to interactions with Dr. Arlen, whose passion for Classical Armenian, and his desire to promulgate it, inspired me to dig deeper into the language. Toward the end of September 2021, I began working on the translation when time permitted, and conducted online research into the many aspects of the hmayil's content with which I was unfamiliar. The end result of these endeavors is presented here. I am indebted to Dr. Arlen, not only for introducing this hmayil to me and others during his "Krapar yev Kini" session, but for greatly improving this work with his meticulous editing, educating me when I made mistakes, and offering insights into subject matter of which I was unaware. Any errors in the translation and commentary are, of course, mine alone. Եւ վասն ամենայն օգնութեան քոյ եւ քաջալերութեան, գոհանամ զքէն, Արլէն սոփեստոս:

² *Hmayil* is the modern term used for the scrolls; scribes and printers typically spelled it as *hamayil* (համայիլ), *hēmayil* (հեմայիլ) or *hēmayēl* (հեմայէլ) in their colophons (J. S. Arlen, personal communication, 11 October 2022). See the spelling of the word in Part 28 and in Appendix C, Figs. 28 and 29, below.

Introduction

Jagiellonian University, Krakow, argues that although the Pahlavi word *humāy* (not *humav*), meaning ‘bird of good omen’, is the source of the older Armenian words *hmayk’* (հմայք), ‘omen, charm’, and *hmayem* (հմայեմ), ‘to augur, enchant’, neither Pahlavi word is the source of *hmayil*. In concurrence with Russell, Pisowicz contends that the word *hmayil* is derived from Arabic *ḥimāla* (plural *ḥamā’il*), with a Semitic root of H-M-L, meaning ‘carry’, and points out that one of the meanings of Arabic *ḥimāla* is precisely ‘amulet’. Pisowicz believes that when Arabic words began to enter medieval Armenian dialects after the seventh-century expansion of Islam, the word *h(a)mayil*, with a meaning related to the verb ‘wear’, entered the Armenian language, and that this word later became associated with the older and (coincidentally) similar-sounding words *hmayk’* and *hmayem* (Pisowicz: *passim*).³

The oldest extant *hmayil* is dated 1428 (Matenadaran Scroll No. 115), although it is possible that there were older ones that have not survived to this day. *Hmayils* were originally hand-written by scribes, and most of them were also illustrated. The legibility of the script and elegance of the illustrations varied considerably.



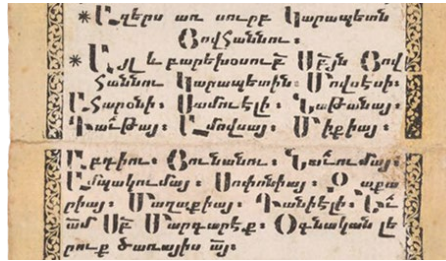
With the growth of Armenian printing houses in the latter-half of the seventeenth century, *hmayils* were also printed. Printed *hmayils* typically contain a number of intricate woodcut illustrations (usually related to the subject matter, but sometimes simply for decorative purposes), and in many of them, the illustrations were hand-colored afterwards. The *hmayils* were printed in sections and then glued together to create a single scroll.

³ For a somewhat fanciful etymology of the word *hmayil*, see p. 19 below.

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Hand-colored woodcut illustration.



← Seam between printed sections

Hmayils were valued for their protective powers, and were often carried like an amulet, talisman or phylactery. In fact, the Armenian hmayil represents a continuation of that ancient tradition of wearing an amulet to ward-off or bind evil spirits, a phenomenon known across many cultures that goes back to antiquity. At the end of many prayers, a space would be left open, usually after *tsar'ayis astutsoy* (ծառայիս աստուծոյ) “of/for this servant of God”, where the name(s) of the hmayil’s owner was to be written, so that its protective powers would specifically apply to those named.⁴ Prayers, hymns or songs that did not provide specific protection to the beneficiary would often contain an addendum, sometimes unrelated to the preceding text, with some variant of the following formula: “be helper and guardian (օգնական և պահապան) of this servant of God (*name*).”

Addendum with a space
for names to be written →



Printed hmayils often included the same prayers in the same order, usually beginning with the well-known credal prayer of St. Nersēs Shnorhali (the “Gracious”), “With Faith I Confess” (Հաւատով Խոստովանիմ, *Hawatov Khostovanim*). They would often include supplications to the holy Virgin Mary, St. John the Forerunner, St. Stephen the Protomartyr, and St. Gregory the Illuminator, Prayers 41 and 12 from St. Gregory of Narek’s *Book of Lamentation* (Մատենան Ողբերգութեան, *Matean Oghbergut’ean*), passages from the four Gospels, prayers for good commerce and the protection of merchants, and prayers (incantations) seeking protection from malevolent forces such as demons, evil spirits, and the evil eye. Since these malevolent forces were believed to be the cause of illness and disease, hmayils also provided healing to their named beneficiaries.

Hmayils are of linguistic interest in that the texts can encompass up to twelve centuries of the written Armenian language, with Scriptural passages written in the pure Classical Armenian (գրաբար, *grabar*) of the “Golden Age” of the language (fifth century), the prayers of St. Gregory and St. Nersēs from the Pre-Middle Armenian period of the language (eighth to twelfth century), and later texts in which the language exhibits aspects of Middle Armenian (twelfth to seventeenth century). Compared to the Biblical texts and prayers of these Saints, the later texts are much simpler in their writing style as well as theology, and spelling and grammatical errors can be found.⁵ On

⁴ The hmayil presented here is atypical in that it does not have any names written in the blank spaces. Some hmayils have the originally-written name excised and replaced with that of a subsequent owner (see, for example, Appendix C, Fig. 26.).

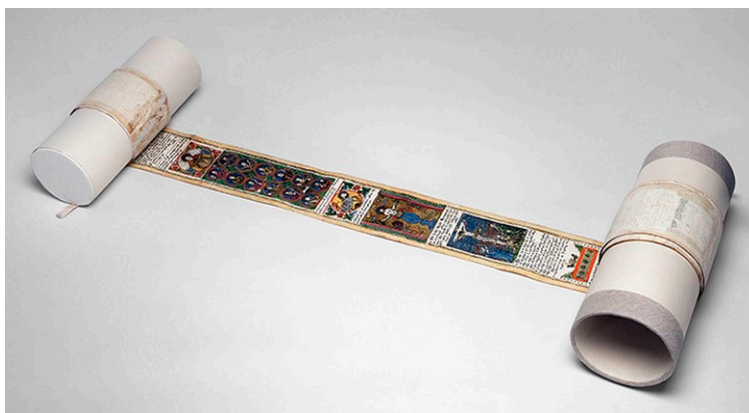
⁵ See, for example, the textual commentary in note 73 below. The writing in some handwritten hmayils can appear somewhat unrefined, as reflected in Appendix C, Figs. 6 and 7. According to the late Frédéric Feydit (1908–1991), who was the longtime Director of the Armenian Studies Section of the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations in Paris, these texts were likely originally drafted by the lower orders of the clergy,

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occasion, borrowings from Arabic or Turkish are present, and the spelling of some words reflects the “western” pronunciation of certain consonants, which differs from that of Classical Armenian.⁶

The Hmayil

The hmayil transcribed and translated herein was printed in 1727,⁷ and is now part of the Armenian Rarities Collection of the Library of Congress. It is approximately four inches wide, and when unrolled, about twenty-one feet long. For a sense of its size and scale, see the image of the unrolled hmayil to the left, and as a partially open scroll to the right.



The identity of the publisher is not given, either on the hmayil itself or the Library of Congress website. However, based on a comparison of the sequence and titles of the prayers in this hmayil with that of others, this hmayil was likely printed by Astuatsatur of Constantinople (*Kostandnupōlsets'i*), who with his son and successor operated a printing house in that city from 1698 to 1779 (Ghazaryan 2018: 72, 81–88.). Four of the illustrations in the hmayil contain the letters ԳՐ (*GR*) or ԳՄ (*GM*), indicating that the woodcuts for these illustrations were carved by Grigor Marzuanets'i (Գրիգոր Մարզուանեցի).⁸ Marzuanets'i was not only renowned for his artistic ability, but also competed with Astuatsatur with his own printing house from 1696 to *ca.* 1733.⁹



The letters ԳՐ, for Grigor Marzuanets'i. →

and were written in the classical language, the solemn and hieratic nature of which gave the texts a respectable as well as mysterious character, which qualities were of primary importance to ensure necessary credence in the protective efficacy of the texts. The classical language of some texts, copied by poorly educated or almost illiterate scribes, is occasionally very corrupt. (Feydit: 14.)

⁶ Spelling variants based on these “western” consonantal phonemes can be found in the written record going back to some of the oldest extant Armenian manuscripts (J. S. Arlen, personal communication, January 2022).

⁷ As stated at its end: “This hmayil was written in 1176 of the Armenian Era [= 1727 A.D.] on May 20.”

⁸ Grigor did not include his initials on his later woodcuts (Ghazaryan 2018: 71), and it is possible that other illustrations in the hmayil were also made with his woodcuts.

⁹ Dickran Kouymjian, Emeritus Professor of Armenian Studies at California State University, Fresno, discusses Grigor Marzuanets'i:

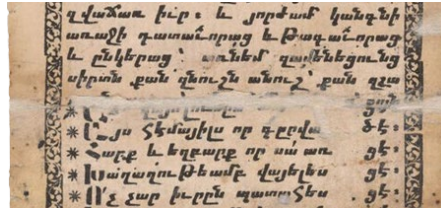
Trained at the Amrdowla Monastery as a scribe and miniaturist, Grigor Marzuanets'i became an innovator in printing as well as book illustration. He was apparently the first to use the technique of carving woodcuts upright from a tree rather than horizontally, a manner borrowed into British woodcuts of the same century directly from the Armenian experience. Some twenty books were printed or illustrated by him, some in multiple editions. His artistic achievement was so admired that even after his disappearance and probable death [*ca.* 1733], nearly all printers used these engravings shamelessly until the end of the

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According to information on the Library of Congress website, the hmayil was repaired in the twentieth century with adhesive and Turkish paper currency. It received extensive conservation treatment at the Library of Congress and has been restored to almost its original state. The condition of the restored hmayil is very good, and the quality of the hand-coloring of the printed illustrations also appears excellent, compared to other extant hmayils.¹⁰

Notwithstanding its very good condition, this hmayil appears to be missing its first section and most of its second section, consisting of a decorative illustration, a short prayer to the Holy Trinity, and seven subject-matter illustrations.¹¹ There is also a lacuna of approximately five lines near the end, which may not be apparent at first glance at the restored hmayil.¹²

Lacuna of five lines here →



Contents of the Hmayil

For the sake of presentation herein, the hmayil has been divided into twenty-eight sequential parts, and the contents of each part are listed below (• indicates a text, ◦ indicates an illustration¹³):

Part	Contents
1	◦ Decorative arch above an urn with flowers • Prayer for every person believing in Christ. Made by the lord Nersēs, Catholicos of Armenians. “With faith I confess and worship you, Father and Son and Holy Spirit...” (Nersēs Shnorhali’s <i>Hawatov Khostovanim</i>) • “Hail to you Mary full of grace, rejoice [and be] delighted...”
2	• “Father God, Creator of all, maker of heaven and earth...” ◦ God the Father

eighteenth century, and his innovative iconography was copied on various liturgical objects for over a century. ...

... Like the Armenian printers of Amsterdam and the artists of New Julfa, Grigor was strongly influenced by the Dutch and Flemish school, though he never traveled beyond Constantinople. ... The most dramatic event in his life occurred in 1705–6 when he apparently lost his print shop with all of his books, type, and engravings. The long colophon that describes this bitter event is very guarded and does not mention by name the party or parties responsible, but it was most probably Astuatsatur *dpir* Kostandnupōlsets’i with whom he published his first book and who had established his own printing office in 1698. Astuatsatur continued to print well after Marzuanets’i’s disappearance, using the latter’s engravings liberally. (Kouymjian: 29–30, 35.)

¹⁰ Cf. the other printed hmayils in Appendix C.

¹¹ See Appendix C, Figs. 2 and 3, for the initial two sections of a similar hmayil, with a transcription and translation of the missing prayer. Part 1 of this hmayil retains most of the last illustration of the missing sections (the decorative arch).

¹² See Appendix A for an image of the hmayil divided into its sections as printed, which reflects this lacuna and the two missing sections.

¹³ The woodcut illustrations, which are shown in the facsimile images of the respective Parts of the hmayil below, are also shown separately, approximately full-size, in Appendix B.

Introduction

- Medallions with figures of the Twelve Apostles
 - “Twelve Apostles of Christ, intercede for this servant of God...”
- Lamb holding a cross on a staff
 - “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world...”
- Christ and the Cross in a chalice
 - “Christ within the Chalice of the Sacrifice, who will take away the sins of the world...”
- 3 ◦ The Crucifixion of Christ
 - “Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, who was crucified for us, have mercy on us...” (*Trisagion* hymn)
- 4 ◦ Decorative pedestal with two birds
 - *Supplication to the crucified God, that He may protect [us] from the bonds of demons, and from sorcerers and various sectarians.* “Mighty king, refuge of those who thirst and savior of the oppressed...”
 - “Let the evil princes be driven off...”
 - “Bestower of good things to mankind...”
 - “To you is my thanksgiving, O Lord...” (Psalm 22:25 (21:26 LXX)¹⁴)
 - “Show us, O Lord, your mercy...” (Psalm 85:7 (84:8 LXX))
 - “How great are your deeds, O Lord...” (Psalm 92:5 (91:6 LXX))
 - “You will not be afraid of the terror of night...” (Psalm 91:5 (90:5 LXX))
- 5 ◦ Church of the Sepulchre
 - *It is the Sepulchre of Christ.* “Lord Jesus, make worthy all [those] believing in your holy name...”
 - *Lord’s Prayer.* “Our Father who [art] in heaven, hallowed be thy name...”
- 6 ◦ The Virgin Mary standing on a crescent moon, holding the infant Christ, and surrounded by radiant light
 - *Supplication to the holy Virgin Mary Bearer of God.* “All-blessed Bearer of God, receive our entreaties...”
- 7 • “Truly I say to you, among those born of women...” (Matt. 11:11)
With the text in a rectangle surrounding:
 - John the Baptist holding a cross-staff, with a lamb
 - *Supplication to Saint John the Forerunner.* “Moreover, through the intercession of Saint John the Forerunner...”
- 8 ◦ Saint Stephen the Protomartyr holding a miniature church and a censer
 - *Supplication to Saint Stephen the Protomartyr.* “From you we ask weepingly, Protomartyr of the Lord Creator...”

¹⁴ In the Armenian version of the Old Testament, based in large part on the Septuagint, the numbering of chapters and verses of the Psalms and certain other books differs from that of the Masoretic Text, upon which many English versions are based. In citations where this occurs, the Masoretic numbering is given first, with the Armenian and Septuagint (LXX) numbering in parenthesis.

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- 9 ◦ **St. Gregory the Illuminator holding a bishop's crozier**
 - *Supplication to Saint Gregory the Illuminator.* "We beseech from you, honorable father, Lord Saint Gregory, Part'ew chief..."
- 10 • *Prayer of Protection.* "Holy Father, sanctify me. Holy Son, protect me. Holy Spirit, purify me..."
 - *Prayer of Protection.* "Lord Jesus, you are my helper and I am in your hands at all times..."
- 11 ◦ **The Archangel Gabriel holding the soul of a deceased person**
 - *Regarding the Protection of Angels.* "Gabriel, Michael, Raphael, Dakuel, Athoniel..."
 - *Names of Angels.* "Sariel. Sarakmiel. Guriel. Ganziel. Sedrak. Misak..."
- 12 ◦ **Six-winged seraph holding an emblem with the letters UᲢ UᲢ UᲢ ᲔᲢ**
 - *Prayer for head pain and eye pain.* "The River Jordan flowed here and brought a beautiful and precious tree..."
 - "Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak..." (Psalm 6:2 (6:3 LXX))
 - "Give light, O Lord, to my eyes..." (Psalm 13:3 (12:4 LXX))
- 13 • *Prayer for the evil glance and evil tongue.* "Raniuth, Raphael, Raten, Hamatoun, [and] Hamakez, who are [angelic] attendants of God..."
 - *Prayer for travelers.* "Kenanuel [and] Kendanamael, who are [angelic] attendants of God..."
 - *Prayer for evil occurrences.* "Lord God who loves mankind, Son of the Father who loves mankind..."
- 14 • *Intercession of the holy Kings.* "Moreover, through the intercession of the holy kings..."
 - "Rescue me, O Lord, from the evil man..." (Psalm 140:1 (139:2 LXX))
 - "O God, attend to help me..." (Psalm 70:1 (69:2 LXX))
 - "Give power to your servant..." (Psalm 86:16–17 (85:16 LXX))
- 15 ◦ **The Sacrifice of Isaac**
 - "And Abraham took his son Isaac and carried [him] away to his sacrifice..."
 - "Through the intercession also of the Divine Holy Signs of Christ our God..." with the two texts in an intersecting diagonal cross-hatched pattern, and with crosses in the squares created by the pattern
- 16 ◦ **St. Gregory of Narek**
 - *A powerful prayer, of Saint Gregory of Narek. 41.* "Son of the living God, blessed in all things, [whose] begetting by your awesome Father [is] unfathomable..." (Prayer 41 of Saint Gregory of Narek's *Book of Lamentation*)
- 17 • *Prayer said by the same Gregory.* "Mighty Lord God, receive with sweetness my embittered entreaties..." (Latter half of Prayer 12 of Saint Gregory of Narek's *Book of Lamentation*)

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- 18 ◦ **St. George on horseback, holding a lance**
 - *Prayer of Saint George the Warrior*. “Through the intercession of Saint George the Warrior...”
- 19 ◦ **St. Sargis on horseback, with his son Martiros**
 - *Song to Saint Sargis the General*. “O happy Saint Sargis, great soldier of this Armenian nation...”
- 20 ◦ **The Evangelist Matthew writing his Gospel, with an angel**
 - *The Holy Gospel of Matthew. Our Lord Jesus Christ*. “And leaving there Jesus went to the districts of Tyre and Sidon...” (Matt. 5:21–28)
- 21 ◦ **The Evangelist Mark writing his Gospel, with a winged lion**
 - *The Holy Gospel of Mark. Our Lord Jesus Christ*. “And at dawn with the morning rising, he went out, and walked to a deserted place...” (Mark 1:35–42)
- 22 ◦ **The Evangelist Luke writing his Gospel, with a calf**
 - *The Holy Gospel of Luke. Our Lord Jesus Christ*. “And he came down to Capernaum to the city of the Galileans, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths...” (Luke 4:31–37)
- 23 ◦ **The Evangelist John writing his Gospel, with an eagle**
 - *The Holy Gospel of John. Our Lord Jesus Christ*. “And after this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem...” (John 5:1–9)
- 24 ◦ **Sword-bearing saint confronting the demon *al***
 - *Prayer for binding demons*. “Solomon the Wise saw the prince of the demons of darkness, who roared like a [storm] cloud and shrieked like a *vishap*...”
- 25 • *Prayer for childbirth*. “Consider the entreaties of your servant and maidservant, and give them a child...”
 - “As the eyes of a servant [are] upon the hand of his lord...” (Psalm 123:2 (122:2 LXX))
 - “Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, and the world will rejoice...” (John 16:20–21)
- 26 • *Prayer against t’pgha and al*. “The holy Sion, the holy Sisi, and the holy Sisianus, and the holy Noviel, and the holy Taziel, the Angels of God...”
- 27 • *Prayer for the merchant and all [his] activity*. “Then heaven was opened and the angels came out, and they had 66 keys...”
- 28 • “God shall give enjoyment, [by] this hmayil that is written...” (Printer’s colophon¹⁵)

¹⁵ A colophon, յիշատակարան (*yishatakarán*), literally “place of memory” or “memorial”, is a writing that was added to the end of a manuscript by the scribe or illustrator who copied or illuminated it, or was added to the end of the book by its printer. The purpose of colophons was generally two-fold: to record the reason for which the work was performed, identifying the person(s) who commissioned it, and to preserve the memory of the scribe and patron with the expressed hope that readers of the manuscript would offer prayers on their behalf and on that of their family members. They often included information on when and where the work was done, including identifying the Catholicos(es) or rulers of the time. Colophons sometimes included information, in varying

Prayers and Incantations as Writings of Protection

As noted above, this hmayil begins with the lengthy credal prayer, “With Faith I Confess”, by St. Nersēs Shnorhali, one of the Armenian Church’s greatest theologians and poets. The hmayil also includes Prayer 41 and part of Prayer 12 of the *Book of Lamentation*, the book of penitential prayers of St. Gregory of Narek, the preeminent mystical poet of the Armenian Church. In addition, the hmayil contains a passage each from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. As these texts are used by the Armenian Church in canonical prayers of healing or protection, it should come as no surprise that they are included in the hmayil—a portable scroll containing *writings of protection* (գիրք պահպանութեան, *girk’ pahpanut’ean*) for its named beneficiary.

What is more striking is the inclusion of texts that are not so much prayers as incantations invoked to guard against, bind or eradicate evil—either in the abstract, or personified as demons and evil spirits. Consider, for example, one of its shortest texts, the “Names of Angels” (in Part 11). The text begins by simply listing the names of twelve angels, followed by “where these names are remembered, there evil does not approach.” Here, the angels’ names, on their own, contain the protective power to keep evil at bay, with that power contained in the hmayil’s printed words. The text concludes with the formulaic “be helper and guardian of this servant of God.”

Consider also the “Prayer for the evil glance and evil tongue” (in Part 13). In this text, five angelic attendants of God, who “bind and muzzle every evil eye and evil desire and evil thought,” are asked to obstruct bindings and enchantments directed against the servant of God.¹⁶ To do so, they invoke an Armenian folk spell: “the evil eye to the evil thorn, the thorn to the caustic fire, the caustic fire to the stone, the stone to the bottomless sea.” The spell causes all evil to “turn to particle and darkness,” through the evil-disintegrating power of its words.

Likewise, the “Prayer for binding demons” (Part 24) contains a narrative in which Solomon the Wise uses commanding words to control a *vishap*¹⁷ and make it become small. He then puts the *vishap* on his magic ring, and places a piece of the tablets of Sinai—on which are carved the words of the Ten Commandments—on top of the ring to contain the *vishap*. The narrative then invokes

amounts of detail, of what was going on at that time in that part of the world, which offers historians a unique first-hand account of events from the scribe’s perspective. Occasionally they would narrate the trials, tribulations and travels of the scribe in performing the work, or in preserving the manuscript from thieves or marauding invaders. The scribes usually considered themselves unworthy of performing their work, and expressed this sentiment in their colophons. Colophons in printed works would sometimes include the names of the printer, typesetter, inker and presser to be remembered (see Appendix C, Fig. 28), but were generally shorter and provided less information than those in handwritten manuscripts. The colophon at the end of this hmayil includes a short verse passage, but provides little information other than the date of printing. For more information, see Avedis Sanjian, *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 1301–1480. A Source for Middle Eastern History*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969; and Anna Sirinian, “On the Historical and Literary Value of the Colophons in Armenian Manuscripts”, in Valentina Calzolari, ed., *Armenian Philology in the Modern Era. From Manuscript to Digital Text*, Leiden: Brill, 2014, pp. 65–100.

¹⁶ Forms of the noun կապանք (*kapank’*), ‘bonds, bindings, fetters’, and the verb կապել (*kapem*), ‘to bind, tie’, are often used in spells against demons and evil spirits. The words, however, do not necessarily connote entrapment: cf. Matt. 16:19, եւ զոր միանգամ կապեսցես յերկրի՝ եղիցի կապեալ յերկինս, “and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.”

¹⁷ For the storm dragon known in Armenian folk belief as a *vishap* (վիշապ), see note 227 below.

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the power of certain holy items such as Noah's Ark, Jacob's Ladder, and Aaron's Rod, by which "all the evil demons and satanic evil devices shall be expelled and impeded from this servant of God."¹⁸

Finally, in the short narrative of the "Prayer against *t'pgha* and *al*" (Part 26), five angels capture and bind an *al*, a demon which enters into a mother's womb and eats the flesh of her child. The mother of the *al* pleads for pardon of her child, and promises not to go near to the place in which the angels' names appear.¹⁹

Thus while the hmayil contains protective and healing texts, including the aforementioned prayers of Sts. Nersēs and Gregory and the Gospels of healing that are also found in liturgical books of the Armenian Church, such as the *Ritual Book* (Մաշտոց, *Mashtots'*) or the *Book of Hours* (Ժամագիրք, *Zhamagirk'*), it also contains texts that seem to fall outside the boundary of prescribed orthodox rituals and prayers.²⁰

* * *

Although extant hmayils only date back to the early fifteenth century, the Armenian tradition of written protective talismans goes back at least another 800 years.²¹ A homily attributed to the seventh-century *vardapet*²² Yovhannēs Mayravanets'i (also known pejoratively as Mayragomets'i, ca. 572–650),²³ entitled "Missive Regarding Divinatory Augury and Impious Charm Makers" (Թուղթ Վասն Հմայից Դիւթականաց Եւ Անօրէն Յուրթողաց), warns against relying on fate, fortune and phylacteries, and becoming enslaved with one's heart and soul to diviners, enchanters and fortune-tellers, to charms, omens and auguries (Mayravanets'i: 184). Mayravanets'i's admonition against the use of phylacteries (պահարաւք) indicates the existence of a seventh-century equivalent to the Early Modern hmayil—an amulet or talisman carried or worn for protection.²⁴

¹⁸ For Solomon the Wise, his demon-exorcising ability, and the Ring or Seal of Solomon, see Part 24 and notes 226 and 228 below.

¹⁹ For more on this narrative and the demons *al* and *t'pgha*, see Part 26 and the notes there. For a longer version of this narrative, and a discussion of characteristics in common with similar demon-binding narratives in other cultural traditions, see Appendix E.

²⁰ Although not present in this hmayil, certain handwritten hmayils contain undeciphered shapes, symbols and letters, sometimes arranged in grids, which presumably represent spells for protection that appear to fall even further beyond this boundary. See, for example, Appendix C, Figs. 6, 7, 10 and 11.

²¹ It is possible that this tradition goes back even further and predates the creation of the Armenian alphabet in 405 A.D., with protective texts that were written in Syriac, Greek, Pahlavi (Middle Persian), or, as previously noted, in an indecipherable script consisting of shapes and symbols similar to that found in extant hmayils (Khachikyan: *passim*).

²² A *vardapet* (վարդապետ) in the Armenian Church is an ordained teacher, whose title is equivalent to a Doctor of Theology. Most, if not all, of the well-known Armenian theological writers were *vardapets*, trained in the educational monastic institutions in Armenia.

²³ One of the leading Church figures of his age, Yovhannēs Mayravanets'i was a controversial figure due to his Christological views. Thus when the collection of homilies which contained this missive was first published in the early nineteenth century, the texts were ascribed to an undisputedly orthodox figure, the fifth-century Catholicos Yovhannēs Mandakuni (Bibliography, s.v. Mayravanets'i). Most scholars recognize that these homilies belong to Mayravanets'i (La Porta: 172, n. 7, citing Tēr-Mkrtch'ean and Garitte).

²⁴ In Mayravanets'i's homily, forms of the word պահարաւն (*paharan*), from the root պահ- (*pah-*, 'guard, protect') appear thirteen times. The word has the meaning of box, sheath or some other type of protective cover, and in the homily it occurs nine times with some form of the noun գիր (*gir*) 'writing', or the verb գրեմ (*grem*)

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Protective amulets are certainly not unique to Armenia. Evidence of protective measures taken against demons dates back to the second to third millennium B.C. in Mesopotamia:

Outstanding among all supernatural evils defined by the ancient Mesopotamians is the child snatching demoness called Dimme in Sumerian, and Lamashtu in Akkadian. Whereas all other demons remain vague entities often operating in groups and hardly distinct from each other, Dimme/Lamashtu has become a definite personality, with a mythology, an iconography, and a recognizable pattern of destructive action. The fear she obviously inspired gave rise to a varied set of counter measures, involving incantation-rituals, herbs and stones, amulets, and the support of benevolent gods and spirits. (Wiggermann: 217.)

Unfortunately, the historical record is silent with regard to the supernatural evils faced by the Bronze Age inhabitants of the Lesser Caucasus highlands that would later be known as Hayastan (Հայաստան) or Armenia. But it is certainly conceivable that the Proto-Armenians of the time likewise understood themselves to be beset by demons similar to Dimme and Lamashtu, and used some type of protective measures against them.

Be that as it may, it was only upon the invention of the Armenian alphabet by Mesrop Mashtots' in 405 A.D. that sorcery and magical practices in Armenia came to be documented in writings of the Church:

Throughout its existence, the Armenian Orthodox Church has condemned magical practices. Refutations of the magical arts have circulated in Armenian from the beginning of its literature in the fifth century. Two treatises have been attributed to the inventor of the Armenian alphabet, Mesrop Mashtots' (5th c.): *The Canon of Grigor Part'ew* [the Illuminator] and the very brief *Discourse Against Augurs*. The former text, which Adontz has argued to be a source for Eznik's *Against the Heresies*, responds to questions about the efficacy of sorcerers, the abilities of demons, and the reality of mythical creatures. *The Discourse Against Augurs* warns that despite Christ's victory on the Cross, Satan can still conduct men to their destruction through augurs, talismans, potions, etc. It further instructs that dreams, augurs, talismans, nonsense, divinations, spells, oracles, sleights of hand, potions, omens, and the like have been anathematized by the Church.

Although the exact dating of these two texts remains uncertain, the eighth, ninth, and tenth canons of the Council of Shahapiwan (444) attest to the anxiety felt by Armenian ecclesiastics concerning the practice of magic in the fifth century. The eighth canon condemns those who engage in sorcery, which it equates with apostasy. The ninth prescribes fines for those who go to oracles or engage in divination. ... The tenth canon, addressed to "they who merely divine but do not practice sorcery", suggests that divining was considered less egregious than practicing sorcery. (La Porta: 171–172.)

Among the practices condemned by the Church in the fifth century are spells and talismans, conceivably used for protection against demons and evil spirits.

At the time of the alphabet's invention, Armenia had been an officially Christian realm for just over one hundred years, since the conversion of king Trdat (Tiridates) III by St. Gregory the

'to write'. Thus *paharan* is contextually understood to be an object that contains or is inscribed with a *writing of protection*—a phylactery, Greek φυλακτήριον (*phylaktērion*), 'safeguard, protection, amulet', from φυλάσσω (*phylásson*), 'to guard, protect'. In fact, in one instance Mayravanets'i states that the "writing phylactery [is] place[d] on a person" (զիւր պահարան ընդ անձն արկանել), not unlike a *hmayil* carried by its owner. (Mayravanets'i: 184–201.)

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Illuminator *ca.* 301 A.D. The Armenian Church, then in its infancy, was making evangelical inroads into the many parts of the realm that remained under the sway of pre-Christian religious traditions, including the Armenian form of Persian Mithraism and Zoroastrianism. At the time, the fear of demons and malevolent spirits was very real for pagan as well as Christian Armenians, and it is likely that protective measures against demonic and evil spirits, and remedies for the harms they caused, were provided more by non-Christian magicians and sorcerers, than by clerics of the fledgling Armenian Church.²⁵

Over the centuries, as the foothold of Christianity in Armenia solidified into the foundation supporting the Armenian Church, the nature of the protective measures against demons and evil spirits likewise changed: illusory and illicit magic was replaced by the Word, the Eucharist, the Holy Cross, the relics of the Saints, and other mediums of divine power which offered protection and effected healing. However, the magical practices were not completely eradicated. The *vardapet* Vardan Aygekts'i (1170–1235), in one of his *Counsels* (Խրատք) entitled “Concerning Idolatry and Sorcery” (Վասն կռապաշտութեան եւ կախարդութեան), observed that “the discipline of paper-charm working and even satanic amulets remained with the generations of women, as well as in the generations of men. And through deceit they teach each one, and bring down the ignorant ones into the same evil.”²⁶

As late as the fifteenth century—around the time the earliest extant hmayils were produced—the Armenian Church was still combatting sorcery and magic. In his *Book of Questions* (Գիրք Հարցմանց), the great theologian and *vardapet* Grigor Tat'ewats'i (1344–1409) felt a need to distinguish the difference between the real works of God and the illusory works of magicians and sorcerers:

How do magicians work wonders?

Answer: There are two kinds of wonders. There is that which changes essence, as Moses turned the river to blood and his staff to a serpent. And this is called a miracle.

And there is that which only changes the form and shape, and it is called an apparition, as Jannes and Jambres used to do through demonic sorcery. Since, as a spectre is not a man, but the likeness of a man; and as Satan takes the form of an angel of light—which he truly is not!—in the same manner his servants demonstrate something that is not true.

... And here I ask, what is the ‘diviner,’ and the ‘augur,’ the ‘sorcerer,’ etc.?

... The sorcerer [is] he who buries some vessel in the earth, [or] ropes, wax, or iron; and with various talismans they apply their art... (La Porta: 177–180.)

²⁵ That the fear of malevolent forces was prevalent in early Christianity is reflected in the Gospel itself, which contains a number of pericopes of Christ casting out demons, including the passages from Matthew, Mark and Luke in this hmayil (Parts 20–22). This fear of personified evil remained present into recent times, not only among Armenians, but with people of all societies and cultures.

²⁶ մնաց առ ազգս կանանց, նաեւ յազգս արանց՝ ուսումն ծրարագործութեան եւ այլ փաթեթք սատանայականք. եւ խաբանաւք ուսուցանեն մի զմի եւ զտգետս կործանեն 'ի նոյն չարն (Khachikyan: 148, citing Matenadaran MS 8030, p. 209a). The word ծրարագործութեան (*tsraragortsut'ean*) is rendered “of paper-charm working” based on its root words ծրար (*tsrar*), ‘packet, envelope’ (that is, folded paper) and գործ (*gorts*), ‘act, work, deed’. See also note 35 below with regard to pages of sacred texts folded and carried as a talisman, akin to the paper charms noted by Aygekts'i in the early thirteenth century.

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Such sorcerers likely applied their art to beneficial as well as malicious ends, promising boons to some and invoking curses upon others. In all probability, some of their talismans were used for protection against malevolent forces.

* * *

Prior to the Enlightenment and the development of materialist schools of thought, most people attributed evil, sickness, misfortune, and other calamities to the machinations of demons or evil spirits. For example, if a sudden storm damaged or destroyed an Armenian farmer's crop, it was not understood to have been caused by meteorological conditions, but was believed to have been generated by a *vishap* (վիշապ) 'storm dragon'. If someone became ill with pneumonia or contracted a disease such as smallpox, it was not deemed to be the result of pathogenic bacteria or viruses (which were as yet undiscovered), but was believed to have been caused by a *ch'ar ach'k'* (չար աչք) evil eye, or a *ts'aw* (ցաւ) evil spirit of disease, of which there were presumed to be 365 (or 366) different types.²⁷ If someone went insane, it was not thought to be the result of an underlying psychological condition or traumatic experience, but because he or she was believed to be *diwahar* (դիւահար) 'possessed by a demon', or *aysahar* (այսահար) 'possessed by an evil spirit'. If someone was born blind, deaf, or with a deformity, it was not attributed to a genetic defect or other environmental factor affecting the fetus, but was believed to have been brought about by a *dew* (դէւ) 'demon', or *ays* (այս) 'evil spirit'.

The complications that may occur during pregnancy, childbirth and infancy were among the most worrisome for premodern people. When mothers miscarried during pregnancy or gave birth to stillborn babies, when mothers or babies died during delivery or in the immediate post-partum weeks, when babies were born with congenital defects, or when apparently healthy babies died within weeks or months after birth, such tragedies likewise were not ascribed to any of the physiological, environmental or circumstantial factors which may have brought them about. Instead, Armenians believed that these birth-related misfortunes were caused by the workings of demons or evil spirits, and often identified the responsible culprits as the *al* (ալ) and the *t'pgha* (թպղա).²⁸

Safeguards against personified malevolent forces were actively sought, and one form of defense was provided by hmayils, in which the words of protection could be carried or worn as an amulet or talisman.²⁹ Frequently, the focus of such texts related to the protection of women and babies during childbirth (see Parts 25 and 26, and Appendix C, Fig. 12, below). Similar amulets, talismans

²⁷ With regard to the nature of the evil eye and *ts'aws* in Armenian folk belief, see note 126 below. In medieval tradition, the number 365 (or 366), the astronomical time of the earth's rotation around the sun, was a number of rich symbolic significance. It was also believed to be the number of Christian saints, the number of veins or muscles in the human body, and the number of diseases and illnesses. (Harutyunyan: 301.)

²⁸ Another demon occasionally included in hmayils, though not in the one here, is the *k'aj* (քաջ, lit. 'brave'), which, among other malevolent deeds, steals babies (see Appendix E and note 289 below). Most cultures have their own tradition of similar demons that snatch, kill, and/or eat babies, traceable as far back as the ancient Mesopotamian demons Dimme and Lamashtu of the second to third millennium B.C. (Russell 2011: 10; Toporkov: 21; Wiggermann: *passim*.)

²⁹ In fact, certain texts in handwritten hmayils were sometimes entitled "writing and talisman". See, for example, Appendix C, Figs. 10 and 11.

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and incantations for this purpose are also found in many other traditions dating back to antiquity (Russell 2011: 20, Toporkov: *passim*; see also the commentary in Appendix E).

By the early fifteenth century, at least some of the sorcerers with whom Grigor Tat'ewats'i was concerned—who applied their art with various talismans—were apparently replaced by (or evolved into) the *tirats'us* who produced hmayils.³⁰ These scribes, often belonging to the minor orders of the Church, possessed ready-made writings based on texts of prayers and spells in circulation, which they copied into the scrolls and then customized with the names of those to whom the protection afforded by the hmayils would apply.³¹

As illustrated above with certain texts of this hmayil, some hmayils contained writings of protection that seem to cross the boundary separating orthodox practice from sorcery. Yet these hmayils, though not sanctioned by the Church, were evidently tolerated: they were produced into the second half of the nineteenth century without any formal condemnation by the Church or other actions taken to suppress their production.

³⁰ Many of the scribes who wrote and illustrated Armenian hmayils had the title of *tirats'u* (տիրացու, from the root word *tēr* [տէր] 'lord', the honorific of a priest), a person who was not ordained as a priest, but was authorized to perform lesser sacerdotal functions. Due, perhaps, to the somewhat illicit nature of some of their activities, not a great deal is known about the *tirats'u* scribes who created the hmayils. Prof. James R. Russell compares the Armenian *tirats'u* with the Ethiopian *debtera* or *dābtāra*:

Let us consider first the evidence of the Ethiopian *debtera*, as closest in religion and culture to Armenia. The *debtera*—the word comes from a Greek term for “parchment”—is, like the Armenian *tirats'u*, an unordained Christian religious practitioner; and it is *debteras* who make magical scrolls. He is considered a holy man in his community, but he can also inspire fear as someone abnormal. One *debtera*, a man named Asres, had an initiatory dream in which a luminous being commanded him to eat the thigh of an impure animal, the hyena: he did this with pleasure, understanding thereby that God purifies the impure. ... There is ample precedent in Armenia for initiatory dreaming, though I know of no case for the *tirats'u* who made scrolls. However, there may be an overlap in the case of the modern Armenian *nayogh*, or “seer” of the Otherworld. ... Tradition attributes to *debteras* other supernatural experiences in connection with their acquisition of magical knowledge. ...

... In Ethiopia a master of talisman-making trains acolytes for seven years before they get a notebook of their own. It can be a demanding job to be a *debtera* and teacher: Asres always wanted to study liturgical poetry, for example, but never had time. The scrolls themselves are strikingly similar to the Armenian hmayils, down to the cross-hatched pattern in invocations of the Holy Cross and other crosses. ... [See the cross-hatched section of this hmayil in Part 15 below.]

The magical scrolls and other texts and paintings of Christian Ethiopia are so very close in subject and style to those of Armenia that they may fairly be said to belong to a single, common East Christian tradition of folk religion. So, although the social and historical context of the East African *debtera* is in many respects radically different from that of the *tirats'u* in the Ottoman Empire and the Transcaucasus, it would not be unreasonable to infer at least some similarities between the two classes of magician-artists. These might include a powerful, even traumatic, initiatory dream or other vision followed by apprenticeship and the production at graduation of one's own magical notebook; the experience of possession by a spirit or saint; ancillary mastery of healing arts, particularly herbal ones; making scrolls and other talismans to order for afflicted clients; an uneasy symbiosis with the established Church; and a position in the community of mixed reverence and fear. In both nations, a sanctioned niche is thus found for individuals who might be stigmatised as marginal or abnormal elsewhere: a feature of traditional societies innocent of the blessings or curses of psychiatry and its attendant world view. (Russell 2011: 22–25.)

³¹ Most handwritten hmayils were apparently produced in advance with the beneficiary names added later, as evidenced by the different ink in which the names were often written (see the handwritten hmayils in Appendix C). The standard prayer and spell texts upon which they were based often included the typical phrase “... this servant of God ‘name’”, and when copying these texts into a hmayil, the scribes would sometimes inadvertently write the word ‘name’ (Feydit: 9).

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The *tirats'us* scribes of the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries were surely not the same impious charm makers with which Yovhannēs Mayravanets'i was concerned in the eighth century. The practices of the former fell somewhere in between magic and prescribed practice: to protect people from evil, the *tirats'us* made charms, while also making supplication to the Holy Trinity. The scribes of some hmayils sought to disassociate themselves from attributions of sorcery or the more illicit practices of others. In the colophon of a 1777 hmayil (Matenadaran Scroll No. 424), the scribe Yovhannēs states:

Now this holy writing of protection was written, which is called *Hēmayēl*, which is unsuitable, [as it is] a certain name [that] they ignorantly name *Hēmayēl*, because a sorcerer knows how to speak *Hem*, and the text they create is said [to be] *Hemeayel*, that is, created or written *in Hem*.³² Now this [hmayil] is not like that, but [is] pure and clear of all sorcerous things. Rather [it contains] the implorations and prayers of our holy and blessed and spiritual *vardapets*, namely Saint Gregory of Narek the angelic *vardapet*, as well as Saint Nersēs of Kla the gracious and blessed patriarch, by relying on whose prayers we created this writing of protection [that is] also demon expelling and dispersing of all *ts'aws*.³³

As noted above, beginning in the late seventeenth century, hmayils were also printed. The texts in the printed versions seem to be more orthodox than those found in certain handwritten ones.³⁴ This change in the nature of the texts can be seen in part as the result of the changing times, not only in Armenia but throughout the world, in which modern ideas that were accompanying the new technologies were beginning to suppress or replace older folk beliefs, especially in the more cosmopolitan cities in which the printing houses were located. It may also be due to the fact that the less-orthodox handwritten hmayils were prepared *sub rosa* by *tirats'us*, while the printing houses that produced hmayils also printed books for the Church, and thus were under more scrutiny by ecclesiastic authorities.

In both the handwritten and printed hmayils, the protective power was believed to reside in the words themselves, but the words were presumably used in different ways by different people—

³² *Hem* (Հեմ) is presumed to be some sort of incantatory words or language that the scribe believes to be spoken by the sorcerer, with a declined form of *Hemayi* (Հեմայի), 'in/with Hem'. *Hemeayel* (Հեմեայել) can thus be seen as a participle adjective or substantive derived from *Hemayi*, meaning '(thing) made in/with Hem'.

³³ Արդ գրեցաւ այս սուրբ գիրս պահպանութեան, որ կոչի Հեմայել, որ է անպատեհ, իմն անուն տգիտաբար անուանեն Հեմայել, վասն զի Հեմ ասելն կախարդ իմանի, եւ նոցա արարեալ գիրն ասի Հեմեայել, այսինքն Հեմայի արած կամ գրած: Արդ ոչ է սա այնպէս, այլ զուտ եւ մաքուր յամենայն կախարթական յիրաց: Այլ մաղթանք եւ աղօթք սուրբ եւ երջանիկ եւ հոգիացեալ վարդապետացն մերոց, այսինքն սրբոյն Գրիգորի Նարեկացոյ հրեշտակակրօն վարդապետի, նաեւ սրբոյն Ներսէսի Կլայեցոյ շնորհալի եւ երջանիկ հայրապետին, որոյ աղօթք ապաւինելով արարուք գիրս պահպանութեան եւ դիւստալած եւ փարատիչ ամենայն ցաւոց: (Ghazaryan 2013: 9.)

³⁴ This is based on a limited review of handwritten hmayils. However, the obvious magical elements seen in certain less-orthodox handwritten hmayils, such as indecipherable shapes, symbols or letters placed in grids, are not found in printed hmayils. The titles of the texts are also different: in these handwritten hmayils, they often begin with the word *gir* (գիր) 'writing' (that is, a written spell), while in printed hmayils, most begin with the word *aghōt'k'* (աղօթք), 'prayer', or *aghers* (աղերս), 'supplication'. After hmayils began to be printed, some of the handwritten hmayils still being produced were styled to emulate the printed ones in both appearance and content, while others retained their magical elements. See, for example, Appendix C, Figs. 19–20 (from 1865) and Fig. 21 (from 1803), as compared to Figs. 4–7 (from 1860).

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from those who were more learned and sophisticated, to those who were uneducated and illiterate. In seeking protection and relief, some may have silently recited or vocally chanted the prayers, songs and Scriptures. Others may have merely carried the words with them as an amulet or charm.³⁵

Regardless of how the words were used, most hmayils relied on Scripture or canonical texts—or as the scribe Yovhannēs stated, on the implorations and prayers of Armenian’s holy, blessed and spiritual *vardapets*—to protect or heal its named beneficiaries. Yet the less-orthodox texts remained in the hmayils. The narratives of these demon-binding texts, immersed over the centuries in the cultural waters of Christian Armenia, may not have significantly changed over time, but the old illusory magic within them leached away and was replaced by the power of God.

The paradoxical nature of many writings of protection, in which magic-spell narratives rely on the divine Being as the instrument of protection and healing, can be seen in an incantation for curing one who is demon-possessed, from a manuscript containing healing texts similar to those found in hmayils (Matenadaran MS 6678):³⁶

A tree stood in the middle of the earth, [which] had neither branch nor leaf nor root. An eagle was sitting on it, which had neither head nor wing nor feet. Questions were [directed] to the eagle and said, “Why are you sitting in that tree, which has neither branch nor leaf nor root?”

That pestilent eagle said, “I go into the head of man, prey upon the flesh, suck the brain, [and] diminish the light of the eyes.”

The angels and archangels heard that, commanded and said, “We bind you bound by the three hundred and sixty-five saints, who exist in the heart of the sun, which neither angels nor archangels perceive, except only Father God.”

And likewise I say, ... “I bind you, 366 *ts’aw* or illnesses... you are nothing and you return [to] nothing.³⁷ I call upon the writings and Jesus Christ is the remedy for this servant of God [before] *tirats’u* Grigor [who is] (*name*).” ...³⁸

³⁵ According to Prof. James R. Russell, “Armenian protective charms are sometimes leaves of sacred texts folded into triangles or diamonds and kept on one’s person. For example, the passage beginning *Pahapan amen-ayni K’ristos*, ‘Christ, protector of all’, from the long credal prayer *Hawatov khostovanim*, ‘I confess in faith’, by St. Nersēs Shnorhali (‘the Graceful’, d. 1173), which is recited at the end of the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church during Lent, is folded into a triangle, with the recipient’s name written on the outside, and carried as a talisman. The word *pahapan* is critical: it is roughly equivalent to Greek *phylakterion*, the word the Byzantines used for an amulet; another Armenian term for an amulet, *gir*, ‘writing’, would correspond to Byzantine Greek *kharti(on)*. Pages from the prayer book *Matean oghbergut’ean*, ‘Book of Lamentation’, of St. Gregory of Narek, serve the same purpose as the leaves of Shnorhali. But scrolls are the most common shape a protective text generally takes, in Armenia.” (Russell 2011: 18–19.)

³⁶ This manuscript also includes an incantation against the demons *t’pgha* and *al* (Harutyunyan: 131; see Appendix E).

³⁷ “you are nothing and you return [to] nothing” is a traditional spell found in a number of writings of protection, often toward the end of the text as a culminating action that annihilates the demonic evil (Harutyunyan: 45, 46, 92, 104, 107, 117, 272, 300).

³⁸ Ծառ մի կայր ՚ի մէջ երկրի ոչ ճուղն ունէր և ոչ տերև և ոչ արմատ. արծիւ մի նստեալ էր ՚ի վերայ նորա, որ ոչ գլուխ ունէր և ոչ թեւ և ոչ ոտք: Հարցումք եղեն յարծնին և ասէին. Չի՞ նստեալ ես ՚ի ծառոյդ, որ ոչ ճուղն ունի և ոչ տերև և ոչ արմատ:

Ասէ արծիւն այն դշիդն. Երթամ ՚ի գլուխն մարդոյ, զմիսն որսեմ, զուղուղն ծըծեմ, զաշից լոյսն

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In this text—which can hardly be considered a prayer composed by *vardapets*—the *tirats'u* invokes an Armenian folk spell to bind and eradicate the *ts'aws*, and thereby cure the illness. He then makes it perfectly clear that in doing so, Christ is the true remedy.

And so it is that seemingly illicit incantations are found side-by-side with licit prayers and supplications in hmayils that were produced and used by Christian Armenians for over four hundred years.

Transcription and Translation of the Hmayil

As is typical for manuscripts and printed texts, words are often split between lines without the use of hyphenation, and a number of words in the hmayil are abbreviated. Except for passages in verse form, the transcription does not follow the line breaks of the hmayil text, and words are only hyphenated (with marks) in instances where visually excessive spaces between the words would occur without hyphenation. Abbreviated words and phrases are spelled out in full, and the abbreviated letters are indicated by blue text. For example:

Hmayil text:

ա̄ծածիւ

Transcribed text:

աստուածածիւ

Also typical for printed texts having verses with end rhyme, the rhyming syllables are separated from the word and placed at the right margin. In the transcription, these syllables are kept with the word, and indicated by green text. For example:

Hmayil text:

Ծուներ կըրկներ սըրբոյ նշա նիդ:
և նըկարեալ քո պատկե րիդ:

Transcribed text:

Ծուներ կըրկներ սըրբոյ նշանիդ:
և նըկարեալ քո պատկերիդ:

In Classical Armenian, the written letter ը (pronounced *uh*) is generally only used in the initial position of certain monosyllabic words, and words derived from them by nominal composition. By the time of late Middle Armenian, when this hmayil was printed, the letter ը was occasionally written or printed for an unstressed *uh* sound that occurs before or after a consonant (for example, գալստեան, pronounced *gal-us-tyan*, could also be written գալըստեան). Similarly, the letter ը was also written when a vocalized syllable was needed to fit the meter (for example, նշան, when meant to be pronounced *nuh-shan* in verse, would be written նըշան). Also, in instances where the letter pair ու (the vowel 'u') precedes another vowel and is pronounced as the consonant 'v', the letter n in the pair was sometimes replaced with ը (for example, լուացից, pronounced *luh-vats-eets*, could also be written լըլացից). Where these instances of a written ը occur in the hmayil, the letter is likewise included in the transcription. Furthermore, the letter ը was regularly added when a word was split between lines in a manuscript or printed text, to prevent the initial or final consonants of the word from being written on their own, without a vowel, at the end of the line or

պակասացնեմ:

Լսեցին զայն հրեշտակք և հրեշտակապետք, հրամայեցին և ասեն. Կապեալ կապենք զքեզ երեք հարիւր և ԿԵ սրբովք, որք կան 'ի սիրտ արեգական, որ ոչ հրեշտակք գիտեն և ոչ հրեշտակապետք, բայց միայն հայր Աստուած:

Եւ դարձեալ ասեն. ... Կապեն զքեզ, ՅԿԶ ցաւ կամ ախտածեալք... չիք ես եւ չիք դառնաս: Ջգիրս ես կարդամ և դեղ Յիսուս Քրիստոս լինի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ տիրացու Գրիգորին այս անունն: ... (Harutyunyan: 117–118.)

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the beginning of the next. In these instances, however, the superfluous letter ը has not been included in the transcription.

Where lacunae occur in the hmayil, the missing text (derived contextually or from a similar hmayil) is indicated by orange text, for example, ամուշ՝ քան զշաքարն քաղցր.

Marks over the letter լ in the hmayil (for example, լը՛ւցից), indicating that the letter is pronounced as *v*, are not reproduced in the transcription. Apart from this, the punctuation of the hmayil text is maintained in the transcription, but has been modified in the translation where necessary for the sake of comprehension and clarity. The capitalization of words in the hmayil is also maintained in the transcription, but modified in the translation to conform to standard conventions.³⁹ Personal and place names that are commonly known or Biblical have been rendered with the applicable name in English (for example, Ամպակունի (*Ampakum*) is rendered “Habakkuk”), while lesser-known names have been transliterated using the Library of Congress system (for example, պարթև is rendered “Part’ew”).

Footnotes are referenced in both the transcription and the translation, but the notes themselves are only in the translations.

In translating the hmayil into English, it was our intent to veer toward the literal, allowing some of the Armenian idiom to show through in the translation, while still keeping it readable. Naturally, certain choices made in this translation will differ from those of another translator. Brackets are used where English words have been added for clarity, and words or phrases of special significance or other interest are discussed in individual footnotes.

* * *

The facsimile, transcription and translation of this fascinating scroll is presented with the hope that readers will gain knowledge of, and appreciation for, the traditional Armenian religious, artistic and folk magic artifact known as a hmayil. Even though it’s a little faded and torn, and is no longer used for healing and protection, this hmayil is still imbued with the undiminished power of its words. And so:

God shall give enjoyment,
By this hmayil that is written.
Fathers and brothers who receive this one,
Shall enjoy it with peace.
Evil shall not be encountered,
Good intention shall be achieved,
A ripe old age shall be attained.
The Father shall remember us by our contrition.
And he who departs this world,
Shall inherit the Kingdom.

— Matthew J. Sarkisian
October 2022

³⁹ Personal and place names in the hmayil, including աստուած (*astuats*) ‘God’ and քրիստոս (*k’ristos*) ‘Christ’, are usually not capitalized unless the word is in the title, is the first one of a passage, or follows a *verjaket* ‘end of sentence full stop’ (:).

The Hmayil

Part 1

◦ Decorative arch above an urn with flowers.⁴⁰

* Աղօթք իւրաքանչիւր անձին հաւատացելոյ 'ի Քրիստոս: Արարեալ տեառն Ներսիսի Հայոց Կաթողիկոսի:⁴¹

ՀԱՒԱՏՈՎ ԽՈՍտովանիմ և երկիր պագանեմ⁴² քեզ Հայր և Որդի և սուրբ Հոգի անեղ և անմահ բնութիւն. արարիչ հրեշտակաց և մարդկան և ամենայն եղելոց. և ողորմեա՛ք քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:⁴³

* Հաւատով խոստովանիմ և երկիր պագանեմ քեզ՝ անբաժանելի լոյս միասնական սուրբ երրորդութիւն և մի՛ աստուածութիւն արարիչ լուսոյ և հալածիչ⁴⁴ խաւարի. հալածեա՛ 'ի հոգւոյ իմմէ զխաւար մեղաց և անգիտութեան. և լուսաւորեա՛ զմիտս իմ 'ի ժամուս յայսմիկ աղօթել քեզ 'ի հաճոյս՝ և ընդունիլ 'ի քէն զինդրուածս իմ. և ողորմեա՛ք քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:⁴⁵

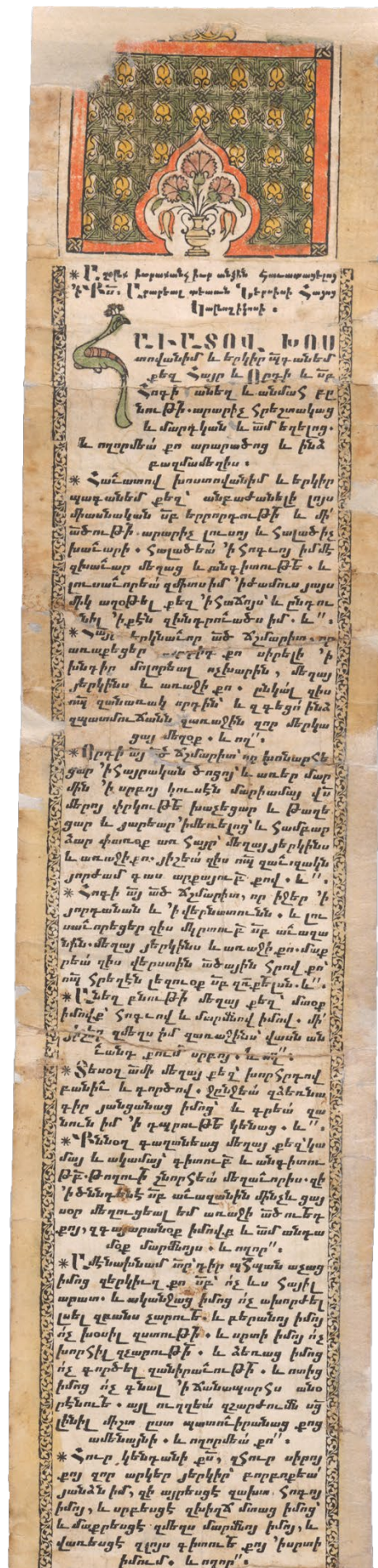
* Հայր երկնաւոր աստուած ճշմարիտ, որ առաքեցեր զորդիդ քո սիրելի 'ի խնդիր մոլորեալ ոչխարին, մեղայ յերկինս և առաջի քո. ընկալ զիս որպէս զանառակ որդին՝ և զգեցո՛ր ինձ զպատմութեանն զառաջին զոր մերկացայ մեղօթ.⁴⁶ և ողորմեա՛ք քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Որդի աստուծոյ աստուած ճշմարիտ՝ որ խոնարհեցար⁴⁷ 'ի հայրական ծոցոյ՝ և առեր մարմին 'ի սրբոյ կուսէն մարիամայ վասն մերոյ փրկութեան խաչեցար և թաղեցար և յարեար 'ի մեռելոց՝ և համբարձար փառօք առ հայր՝ մեղայ յերկինս և առաջի քո. յիշեա՛ զիս որպէս զաւագակն⁴⁸ յորժամ գաս արքայութեամբ քով. և ողորմեա՛ք քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Հոգի աստուծոյ աստուած ճշմարիտ՝ որ իջեր 'ի յորդանան և 'ի վերնատունն. և լուսաւորեցեր զիս մկրտութեամբ սուրբ աւագանին. մեղայ յերկինս և առաջի քո. մաքրեա՛ զիս վերստին աստուածային հրով քո՝ որպէս հրեղէն լեզուօք սուրբ զառաքեալսն. և ողորմեա՛ք քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Անեղ⁴⁹ բնութիւն մեղայ քեզ՝ մտօք իմովք՝ հոգւով և մարմնով իմով. մի՛ յիշեր զմեղս իմ զառաջինս՝ վասն անւանդ քում սրբոյ. և ողորմեա՛ք քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

⁴⁰ This illustration is the remaining portion of the second missing section of the hmayil (see Appendix A, and Appendix C, Figs. 2 and 3). Just after it is the seam between that section and the third, which begins the prayer.



* Տեսող ամենայնի մեղայ քեզ՝ խորհրդով բանիւ և գործով. ջընջեա՛ զձեռնագիր յանցանաց իմոց՝ և գրեա՛ զանուն իմ՝ ՚ի դպրութեան կենաց. և **ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս**:

* Քննող գաղտնեաց մեղայ քեզ՝ կամայ և ակամայ՝ գիտութեամբ և անգիտութեամբ. թողութիւն շնորհեա՛⁵⁰ մեղաւորիս. զի ՚ի ծննդենէ սուրբ աւագանին մինչև ցայսօր մեղուցեալ եմ առաջի աստուածութեանդ քոյ, զգայարանօք իմովք և ամենայն անդամօք մարմնոյս. և **ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս**:

* Ամենախնամ տեր՝ դիր պահապան աչաց իմոց գերկիւղ քո սուրբ՝ ո՛չ ևս հայիլ արատ. և ականջաց իմոց ո՛չ ախորժել լսել զբանս չարութեան. և բերանոյ իմոյ ո՛չ խօսել զստութիւն. և սրտի իմոյ ո՛չ խորհիլ զչարութիւն. և ձեռաց իմոց ո՛չ գործել զանիրաւութիւն. և ոտից իմոց ո՛չ գնալ ՚ի ճանապարհս անօրէնութեան. այլ ուղղեա՛⁵¹ զշարժումս սոցա լինիլ միշտ ըստ պատուիրանաց քոց ամենայնի. և **ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս**:

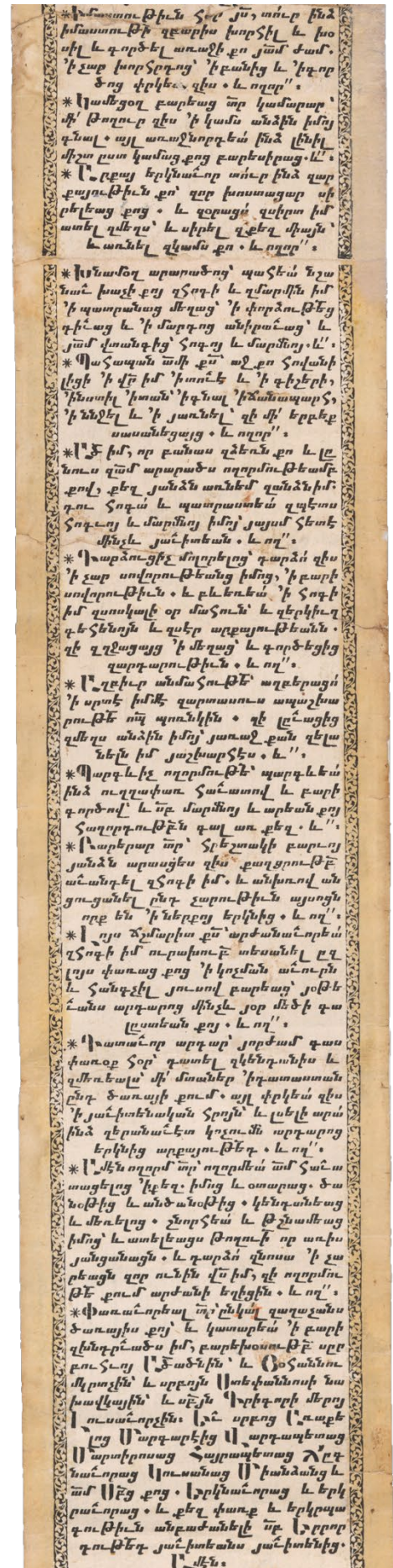
* Հուր կենդանի քրիստոս, զհուր սիրոյ քոյ զոր արկեր յերկիր՝ բորբոքեա՛ յանձն⁵² իմ,⁵³ զի այրեսցէ զախտ⁵⁴ հոգոյ իմոյ, և սրբեսցէ զխիղճ մտաց իմոց՝ և մաքրեսցէ զմեղս մարմնոյ իմոյ, և վառեսցէ զլոյս գիտութեան քոյ ՚ի սրտի իմում. և **ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս**:

* Իմաստութիւն հօր յիսուս, տո՛ւր⁵⁵ ինձ իմաստութիւն զբարիս խորհիլ և խօսիլ և գործել առաջի քո յամենայն ժամ. ՚ի չար խորհրդոց՝ ՚ի բանից և ՚ի գործոց փրկեա՛ զիս. և **ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս**:

* Կամեցող բարեաց տէր կամարար՝ մի՛ թողուր զիս ՚ի կամս անձին իմոյ գնալ. այլ առաջնորդեա՛ ինձ լինիլ միշտ ըստ կամաց քոց բարեսիրաց. և **ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս**:

* Արքայ երկնաւոր տո՛ւր ինձ զարքայութիւն քո՝ զոր խոստացար սիրելեաց քոց. և զօրացո՛ զսիրտ իմ ատել զմեղս՝ և սիրել զքեզ միայն՝ և առնել զկամս քո. և **ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս**:

* Խնամող արարածոց՝ պահեա՛ նշանաւ խաչի քոյ զհոգի և զմարմին իմ՝ ՚ի պատրանաց մեղաց՝ ՚ի փորձութեանց դիւաց և ՚ի մարդոց անիրաւաց՝ և յամենայն վտանգից՝ հոգոյ և մարմնոյ. և **ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս**:



* Պահապան ամենայնի քրիստոս՝ աջ քո հովանի⁵⁶ լիցի 'ի վերայ իմ 'ի տուե և 'ի գիշերի, 'ի նստիլ 'ի տան, 'ի գնալ 'ի ճանապարհ, 'ի ննջել և 'ի յառնել, զի մի՛ երբեք սասանեցայց. և ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Աստուած իմ, որ բանաս զձեռն քո և լնուս զամենայն արարածս ողորմութեամբ⁵⁷ քով, քեզ յանձն առնեմ զանձն իմ. դու հոգա՛ և պատրաստեա՛ զպէտս հոգւոյ և մարմնոյ իմոյ՝ յայսմ հետե մինչև յաւիտեան.⁵⁸ և ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Դարձուցիչ մոլորելոց՝ դարձո՛ զիս⁵⁹ 'ի չար սովորութեանց իմոց, 'ի բարի սովորութիւն. և բւեռեա՛ 'ի հոգի իմ զսոսկալի օր մահուն՝ և զերկիւղ գեհենոյն⁶⁰ և զւեր արքայութեանն. զի զղջացայց 'ի մեղաց՝ և գործեցից զարդարութիւն. և ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Աղբիւր⁶¹ անմահութեան՝ աղբերացո՛ 'ի սրտե իմմէ զարտասուս ապաշխարութեան որպէս պոռնկին.⁶² զի լըւացից զմեղս անձին իմոյ՝ յառաջ քան զելանելն իմ յաշխարհէս. և ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

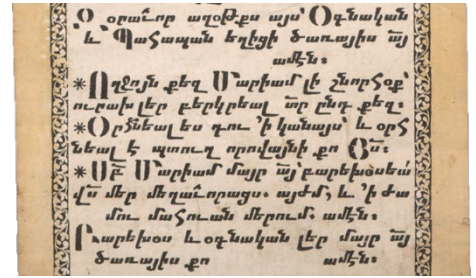
* Պարգևիչ ողորմութեան՝ պարգևեա՛⁶³ ինձ ուղղափառ Հաւատով և բարի գործով՝ և սուրբ մարմնոյ և արեան քոյ հաղորդութեամբն գալ առ քեզ. և ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Բարերար տէր՝ հրեշտակի բարւոյ յանձն արասցես զիս քաղցրութեամբ աւանդել զհոգի իմ. և անխոռով անցուցանել ընդ չարութիւն այսոցն որք են 'ի ներքոյ երկնից. և ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Լոյս ճշմարիտ քրիստոս՝ արժանաւորեա՛ զհոգի իմ ուրախութեամբ տեսանել զլոյս փառաց քոց 'ի կոչման աւուրն և հանգչիլ յուսով բարեաց՝ յօթեւանս արդարոց մինչև յօր մեծի գալստեան քոյ. և ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Դատաւոր արդար՝ յորժամ գաս փառօք Հօր՝ դատել զկենդանիս և զմեռեալս՝ մի՛ մտաներ 'ի դատաստան ընդ ծառայի քում. այլ փրկեա՛ զիս 'ի յաւիտենական հրոյն՝ և լսելի արա՛ ինձ զերանաւետ կոչումն արդարոց երկնից արքայութեանդ. և ողորմեա՛ քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս:

* Ամենողորմ տէր՝ ողորմեա՛ ամենայն հաւատացելոց 'ի քեզ. իմոց և օտարաց.⁶⁴ ծանօթից և անծանօթից. կենդան-



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եաց և մեռելոց. շնորհեա՛ւ և թշնամեաց իմոց՝ և ատելեացս թողու^{թիւն} որ առ իս յանցանացն. և դարձո՛ւ զնոսա՝ ի չարեացն զոր ունին վ^{ասն} իմ, զի ողորմութե^{ան} քում արժանի եղիցին. և ողորմեա՛ւ քո արարածոց և ինձ ^{բազմամեղիս}:

* Փառաւորեալ տէր՝ ընկալ՝ զաղաչանս ծառայիս քոյ՝ և կատարեա՛ւ ՚ի բարի զխնդրւածս իմ, բարեխօսութե^{ամբ} սրբուհւոյ Աստուածածնին՝⁶⁵ և Յօհաննու մկրտչին՝ և սրբոյն Ստեփաննոսի նախավկային՝ և սրբոյն Գրիգորի մերոյ Լուսաւորչին:⁶⁶ Եւ սրբոց Առաքելոց Մրգարտից Վարդապետաց Մարտիրոսաց Հայրապետաց⁶⁷ ճգնաւորաց Կուսանաց Միանձանց և ամենայն՝ Սրբոց քոց. Երկնաւորաց և երկրաւորաց. և քեզ փառք և երկրպագութիւն անբաժանելի սուրբ Երրորդութե^{ան}դ յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. Ամեն:

Ջօրաւոր աղօթքս այս՝ Օգնական և Պահապան եղիցի ծառայից աստուծոյ (name)⁶⁸ ամեն:

* Ողջոյն քեզ Մարիամ լի շնորհօթ՝ ուրախ լեր⁶⁹ բերկրեալ տէր ընդ քեզ:

* Օրհնեալ ես դու ՚ի կանայս՝ և օրհնեալ է պտուղ որովայնի քո Յ^{իսուս}:

* Սուրբ Մարիամ մայր աստուծոյ՝ բարեխօսեա՛ւ⁷⁰ վ^{ասն} մեր մեղաւորացս. այժմ, և ՚ի ժամու մահուան մերում. ամեն:

Բարեխօս և օգնական լեր մայր աստուծոյ ծառայիս քո (name) ամեն:

Prayer for every person believing in Christ. Made by the lord
Nersēs, Catholicos of Armenians.⁴¹

⁴¹ Catholicos Nersēs IV of Kla (*Nersēs Klayets'i* [Ներսէս Կլայեցի], 1102–1173, sed. 1166–1173), known by his epithet *Shnorhali* (Շնորհալի), the “Gracious” (lit. ‘filled with grace’), was one of the greatest theological and poetic writers of the Armenian Church. His creative ability is reflected in the many odes and hymns that he wrote, but his most famous work is the prayer which follows, “With Faith I Confess” (Հաւատով Խոստովանիմ, *Hawatov Khostovanim*). In an instructional preface to the prayer, St. Nersēs outlined the manner in which it should be prayed, and the benefits to those who do so:

A prayer for common Christians—old and young, men and women—that all should learn and teach one another: priests their people, fathers their sons, mothers their daughters, and friends their friends. They should pray with it five times a day with twelve kneelings in the morning hour, at mealtime, at midday, in the evening, and at rest. But if someone is negligent or too lazy to perform five prayers, let that one pray four times, or three, or two, or even one time a day, so that at least that one might be recognized as a Christian, and might recognize oneself to be a creature of God and bow down before him. ...

... For this reason, we composed this prayer in simple and clear language, so as to be grasped by the common folk. ... It is powerful in meaning, since it contains in itself much more than the like of our usual requests to God. ... And they who learn and pray it sincerely—with fervent heart and tears—all the requests

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With faith I confess and worship⁴² you, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, uncreated and immortal nature, creator of angels and mankind and all things. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.⁴³

With faith I confess and worship you, indivisible light, unified Holy Trinity and one Godhead, creator of light and banisher⁴⁴ of darkness, banish from my soul the darkness of sins and ignorance, and illuminate my mind at this hour to pray to you pleasingly, and to receive from you my requests. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.⁴⁵

Heavenly Father, true God, who sent forth your beloved Son in search of the sheep that strayed, I have sinned against heaven and before you. Receive me like the prodigal son, and clothe me in the original cloak, of which I was disrobed by sin.⁴⁶ And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Son of God, true God, who humbly descended⁴⁷ from the fatherly bosom, and took flesh from the holy Virgin Mary for our salvation,

that are written it will be fulfilled for them in life and after death. Whereas those who despise it and do not learn it, they themselves will see the harm that comes about to them. (MH 12: 1204–1206, transl. Arlen: 192–193.)

⁴² երկիր պագաննմ (*erkir paganem*), “I worship”, sometimes rendered “I bow down”, literally “kiss the earth”. It is often written as a compound verb, երկրպագաննմ (*erkrpaganem*).

⁴³ և ինձ բազմամեղիս (*ew indz bazmameghis*), “and on me, a great sinner”. This familiar phrase, often rendered “and on me, a manifest sinner”, is not found in the two oldest extant manuscripts of the prayer, Matenadaran MSS 579 (1276–1279 A.D.) and 715 (13th cent.), in which the stanzas of the prayer end with ողորմեա՛ք քո արարածոց (*oghormea՛ k’o araratsots’s*), “have mercy on these your creatures.” (MH 12: 1204–1214.)

⁴⁴ The two oldest extant manuscripts of the prayer, Matenadaran MSS 579 and 715, read հաստիչ (*hasatich’*), “establisher” (MH 12: 1207).

⁴⁵ The repeated line of the prayer, և ողորմեա՛ք քո արարածոց և ինձ բազմամեղիս (*ew oghormea՛ k’o araratsots’ ew indz baghmameghis*), “and have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner”, is abbreviated here, and in the subsequent stanzas.

⁴⁶ The original cloak and clothing metaphors are part of the epic theological expression of the Fall and Redemption in the Syriac Church, from where it entered Armenian theological discourse (J. S. Arlen, personal communication, June 2021). Simply stated, Adam and Eve were originally clothed in Robes of Glory (or Light), and because of their disobedience to God, were stripped of these garments in their Expulsion from Paradise. Christ, in his Incarnation, was clothed in humanity, and he returned the Robe of Glory to the world, making it available again to human beings, when he was baptized in the River Jordan. From the waters of the baptismal font, a person puts on the Robe of Glory (expressed in Western theology as “putting on Christ”, from Gal. 3:27), and is given the potential to forever retain this garment. And on the Judgment Day, the Robe of Glory will become his or hers in reality, provided it has been preserved unsullied through life. For more on this, see Sebastian Brock, “Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac”, in M. Schmidt, ed., *Typus Symbol Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter* (Eichstätter Beiträge IV), Regensburg: Pustet, 1982, pp. 11–40; and *idem*, “The Robe of Glory: A Biblical Image in the Syriac Tradition”, in *The Way* 4 (1999), pp. 247–259.

⁴⁷ խոնարհեցար (*khonarhets’ar*) is usually rendered “you descended” or “you were humbled”. Neither word on its own adequately expresses the meaning of the Armenian verb խոնարհիմ (*khonarhim*). The word “descend” often has only the sense of a change in *location* from high to low, without the sense of a change in

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who was crucified and buried and rose from the dead, and who ascended with glory to the Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. Remember me like the thief,⁴⁸ when you come with your kingdom. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Spirit of God, true God, who came down upon the Jordan and into the Upper Room, and who illuminated me through baptism of the holy Font, I have sinned against heaven and before you. Cleanse me again with your divine fire, like the fiery tongues [cleansed] the holy Apostles. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Uncreated⁴⁹ nature, I have sinned against you with my mind, soul and body. Do not remember my prior sins, for the sake of your holy name. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Seer of all, I have sinned against you in thought, and word and deed. Erase the record of my transgressions, and write my name in the book of life. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Examiner of secrets, I have sinned against you willingly and unwillingly, knowingly and unknowingly. Graciously grant⁵⁰ forgiveness to this sinner, who from birth of the holy Font until this day has sinned before your Godhead, with my senses and all the members of my body. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

All-caring Lord, place your holy fear as a guardian for my eyes to not again gaze lustfully, and for my ears to not relish to hear words of wickedness, and for my mouth to not speak falsehood, and for my

status. Likewise, “humbled” only has the sense of a change in *status*, and not of *location*. In the context of the Incarnation, Christ descended in location from heaven to earth, and Christ (infinite, timeless and immortal) was also humbled in status by becoming man (finite, temporal and mortal). Thus *khonarhets’ar* is rendered “(you) humbly descended”, in an attempt to capture both senses of the word.

⁴⁸ That is, the penitent thief on the cross next to Christ. Cf. Luke 23:42–43, “Then [the thief] said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ [Jesus] replied, ‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’” (NRSV.)

⁴⁹ The diplomatic text of this prayer in the *MH* (Matenadaran MS 579, 1276–1279 A.D.), and four of the six other manuscripts noted therein, read անմեղ (*anmegh*), “sinless”. One manuscript (Venice 1862 A.D.) reads անեղ (*anegh*), “uncreated”, as here in the *hmayil*, and another (Matenadaran MS 592, 1398 A.D.) reads անեղ եւ անմահ (*anegh ew anmah*), “uncreated and immortal”. (*MH* 12: 1208.) It is likely that *anegh*, “uncreated”, is the result of a scribal omission of the letter *m* from *anmegh*, “sinless”.

⁵⁰ This prayer has three different verbs with a meaning akin to ‘give’ or ‘grant’. To distinguish them in the translation, շնորհեալ (*shnorheal*), the imperative form of շնորհեմ (*shnorhem*), from շնորհ (*shnorh*), ‘grace’ (the root word of St. Nersēs’ epithet *Shnorhali*), is rendered “graciously grant”; տուր (*túr*), the imperative form of տամ (*tam*), is rendered “give”; and պարգևեալ (*pargewéal*), the imperative form of պարգևեմ (*pargewem*), from պարգև (*pargew*), ‘gift’, is rendered “bestow the gift”.

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heart to not contemplate wickedness, and for my hands to not commit injustice, and for my feet to not walk on paths of iniquity. Rather, rightly direct⁵¹ their movements to be according to your commandments in all things. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Christ, living fire, kindle in my being⁵² the fire of your love, which you brought down to earth,⁵³ so that it may burn [away] the disease⁵⁴ of my spirit, purify the conscience of my mind, cleanse the sins of my body, and ignite the light of your knowledge in my heart. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Jesus, wisdom of the Father, give⁵⁵ me the wisdom to think and speak and do what is good before you at all times. Deliver me from evil thoughts and words and deeds. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Will-fulfilling Lord, willer of good things, do not allow me to go by my own will. Rather, lead me to be always according to your good-loving will. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Heavenly King, give me your kingdom, which you have promised to your beloved ones. And strengthen my heart to hate sin, to love only you, and to do your will. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Caretaker of creatures, by the sign of your Cross keep my soul and body from the seductions of sins, from the temptations of demons and from unjust men, and from all perils of soul and body. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Christ, guardian of all, may your right hand be a shelter⁵⁶ over me

⁵¹ ուղղեալ (*ughgheal*), “rightly direct”, the imperative form of the verb ուղղեմ (*ughghem*), is often simply rendered “direct”, which lacks the sense of the root word ուղիղ (*ughigh*), ‘right, straight, correct’.

⁵² յանձն (*yandzn*), nom. անձն (*andzn*), “being”, which is used in the Armenian Bible to translate the Greek ψυχή (*psychē*), can also be rendered “self” or “soul”. The Greek word *psychē*, particularly in its New Testament usage, has a broad range of connotations and nuances, and can mean ‘life’ or ‘principle of life’, ‘soul’ in the sense of ‘enlivening force’, or ‘soul’ in the sense of ‘conscious mind’ or ‘self’. For more information on the word ψυχή, see David Bentley Hart, *The New Testament: A Translation*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017, pp. 461–463. Here, “being” as the entirety of one’s self is appropriate, inasmuch as the living fire of Christ is that which purifies the supplicant’s mind, body and spirit, as silver is refined by the fire of the furnace.

⁵³ Cf. Luke 12:49, “I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!” (NRSV.)

⁵⁴ ախտ (*akht*), “disease”. Some manuscripts of the prayer have the word աղտ (*aght*), “filth” (MH 12: 1210), which is likely a scribal error. Manuscripts were often copied based on the scribe listening to someone else’s dictation of the text, and the pronunciation of *akht* and *aght* are almost identical. Because “filth” is also appropriate contextually, the error would not have been apparent to the scribe.

⁵⁵ See note 50 above.

⁵⁶ հովանի (*hovani*), “shelter”, is sometimes rendered “shadow”, often in the context of the shadow of God’s hand or an angel’s wing affording protection to those under it. Since “shadow” also has the sense of being envel-

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through day and night, while staying at home, while going on the road, while sleeping and arising, so that I may never be shaken. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

My God, who opens your hand and fills all creatures with your mercy,⁵⁷ I commit myself to you. Care for and provide the needs of my soul and body from this time forth until the age.⁵⁸ And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Returner of those who strayed, turn me back⁵⁹ from my evil habits to good habits, and nail to my soul the dreadful day of death, and fear of Gehenna⁶⁰ and love of the kingdom, so that I may repent of sins, and do acts of righteousness. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Spring⁶¹ of immortality, make tears of repentance stream from my heart like [the tears] of the sinful woman,⁶² so that I may wash [away] the sins of my self, before my departure from this world. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Bestower of mercy, bestow unto me the gift⁶³ to come to you with orthodox faith, with good works, and in communion with your holy Body and Blood. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

oped by something foreboding (for example, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...”), *hovani* as “shelter” seems more appropriate here.

⁵⁷ The diplomatic text of this prayer in the *MH* (Matenadaran MS 579, 1276–1279 A.D.), and three of the six other manuscripts noted therein, read *քաղցրութեամբ* (*k’aghts’rut’eamb*), “with sweetness” (*MH* 12: 1211).

⁵⁸ *մինչև յաւիտեան* (*minch’ew yawitean*), “until the age”, is often rendered imprecisely as “until eternity”. The Armenian word *yawitean* corresponds to the Greek αἰών (*aiōn*), ‘aeon’ or ‘age’, which word and its derivatives occur frequently in the New Testament. The word *յաւիտեանս* (*yawiteans*), “unto ages”, or the phrase *յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից* (*yawiteans yawitenits’*), “unto ages of ages”, is found often in the prayers and liturgies of the Armenian Church, and elsewhere in the *hmayil*. Here, “until the age” is understood as “until the *coming* age”, that is, until the Kingdom of the second coming of Christ. For more on the somewhat ambiguous word αἰών, see Hart, *op. cit.*, pp. 444–448.

⁵⁹ *Դարձուցիչ մոլորելոց՝ դարձն՝ զիս...* (*Dardzuts’ich’ molorelots’, dardz’o zis...*) “Returner of those who strayed, turn me back...”. Poets such as St. Nersēs Shnorhali often used alliteration in their works, which is very difficult to capture in translation. Here, however, we were able to retain some of the alliterative effect of *dardzuts’ich’* and *dardzo*, with “returner” and “turn... back”.

⁶⁰ *գեհենոյն* (*gehenoyñ*), nom. *գեհեն* (*gehen*), “Gehenna”, is often rendered nonspecifically as “Hell”. The Armenian word *gehen* corresponds to the Greek γέεννα (*gēhenna*), from the Aramaic form of the Hebrew *Gē’-Hinnōm* (גֵּ' הִנּוֹם), ‘Valley of Hinnom’, originally *Gē’ ben-Hinnōm* (גֵּ' בֶן־הִנּוֹם) ‘Valley of Hinnom’s Son’. It is not certain why this valley became associated with a place of eternal punishment. For more information on the word γέεννα, see Hart, *op. cit.*, pp. 448–452.

⁶¹ *աղբիւր* (*aghbiwr*), “spring”, can also be rendered “fountain” or “source”.

⁶² *սոռնկին* (*pořnkin*), nom. *սոռնիկ* (*pořnik*), “sinful woman”, literally “fornicator” or “prostitute”. In the tradition of the Armenian Church, the unnamed sinful woman who washed Christ’s feet with her tears (Luke 7:37–50) was Mary Magdalene.

⁶³ See note 50 above.

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Beneficent Lord, may you commit me to the good angel to deliver [up] my soul with sweetness, and make it pass undisturbed through the wickedness of the evil spirits who are below heaven. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Christ, true light, make my soul worthy to see with joy the light of your glory on the day of [my] calling, and to rest in the dwellings of the righteous with the hope of good things [to come], until the day of your great coming. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Righteous Judge, when you come with the glory of the Father to judge the living and the dead, do not enter into judgment with your servant. Rather, deliver me from the eternal fire, and make audible to me the blissful call of the righteous to your heavenly kingdom. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

All-merciful Lord, have mercy on all who believed in you, those of my [own] and others,⁶⁴ those known and unknown [to me], the living and the dead. Graciously grant forgiveness also to my enemies and my hateful ones for [their] transgressions against me, and turn them away from the malice which they have for me, so that they may be worthy of your mercy. And have mercy on your creatures and on me, a great sinner.

Glorified Lord, receive the supplications of this servant of yours and fulfill my good requests through the intercession of the holy Bearer of God,⁶⁵ and John the Baptist, and Saint Stephen the Protomartyr, and Saint Gregory our Illuminator.⁶⁶ And the holy Apostles, prophets, *vardapets*,⁶⁷ martyrs, patriarchs, ascetics, virgins, hermits and all your saints, heavenly and earthly. And to you glory and worship to your indivisible holy Trinity, unto ages of ages. Amen.

Let this powerful prayer be helper and guardian of this servant of God (*name*).⁶⁸ Amen.

⁶⁴ իմոց և օտարաց (*imots' ew ôtarats'*), "those of my [own] and others". Here the phrase has the sense of those who are my kin and those who are not, or those who are *Armenian* Christians and those who are *foreign* (Byzantines, Georgians, Syriacs, Franks, etc.). The word օտար (*ôtar*), 'other, alien', is sometimes rendered "stranger", which not suitable here, inasmuch as "those unknown [to me]" occurs in the next phrase.

⁶⁵ Աստուածածին (*Astuatsatsin*), a calque of the Greek Θεοτόκος (*Theotókos*), literally "Bearer of God", is often rendered imprecisely as "Mother of God", which in Armenian is Աստուածամայր (*Astuatsamayr*). Cf. also մայր աստուծոյ (*mayr astutsoy*), "Mother of God", in the last two lines of this part.

⁶⁶ The diplomatic text of this prayer in the *MH* (Matenadaran MS 579, 1276–1279 A.D.), and three of the six other manuscripts noted therein, do not include St. Gregory in the list of named intercessors (*MH* 12: 1214).

⁶⁷ See note 22 above.

⁶⁸ Notwithstanding the fact that all requests written in the prayer will be fulfilled for those who pray it sincerely (see note 41 above), Shnorhali's beautiful and wonderfully meaningful "With Faith I Confess" is followed by the formulaic addendum "Let this powerful prayer be helper and guardian of this servant of God (*name*)", so

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Hail to you Mary full of grace, rejoice⁶⁹ [and be] delighted [for the] Lord [is] with you.

Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus.

Holy Mary Mother of God, intercede⁷⁰ for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Mother of God, be intercessor and helper for this servant of yours (*name*). Amen.

that the prayer will specifically provide aid and protection to the named beneficiary of the prayer (here unnamed). A similar addendum is made to the “Hail Mary” prayer which follows.

⁶⁹ ռւրախ լեր, “rejoice”, literally “be glad”. This phrase (with various forms the verb ‘be’) occurs often in the Armenian Bible, as well as in poetic works such as hymns and odes.

⁷⁰ քարեխօսեալ (*barekhōseá*), “intercede”, the imperative form of the verb քարեխօսեմ (*barekhōsem*), corresponds to the Latin word *ora*, the imperative form of *orare*, ‘to beg, pray, beseech’, in the Latin “Hail Mary”. Although the intent is the same, the Armenian word has a different meaning than the Latin, since it is based on the root words բարի (*bari*) ‘good’, and խօսք (*khōsk*) ‘talk, speech’. In essence, Armenian prayers of intercession (քարեխօսութիւն, *barekhōsut’iwn*) ask the intercessor (քարեխօս, *barekhōs*) to put in a good word for us with God.

Part 2

* Հայր Աստուած արարիչդ ամենայնի. երկնի և երկրի ստեղծող: Օգնական և պահապան լեր ծառայիս քո (name)

◦ God the Father.

◦ Medallions with figures of the Twelve Apostles.



* Երկոտասան Առաքելք Քրիստոսի, բարեխօս լերուք ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name)

◦ Lamb holding a cross on a staff.

* Գառն աստուծոյ որ բառնաս զմեղս աշխարհի.⁷² բարձ զմեղս ծառայիս քո (name)



◦ Christ and the Cross in a chalice.⁷¹

*Քրիստոս 'ի մէջ Սկիին Պատարագի, որ բառնայցէ զմեղս աշխարհի: Եւ արդ՝ Սուրբ մարմին և արիւն տեառն. աղաչեմ զքեզ փրկիչ լեր⁷³ 'ի մեղաց զծառայս քո (name) ամեն:

Father God, Creator of all, maker of heaven and earth. Be helper and guardian of this servant of yours (name).

Twelve Apostles of Christ, intercede for this servant of God (name).

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,⁷² take away the sins of this servant of yours (name).

Christ within the Chalice of the Sacrifice, who will take away the sins of the world. And now, Holy Body and Blood of the Lord, I beseech you, save⁷³ this servant of yours (name) from sins. Amen.

⁷¹ Christ in the chalice is surrounded by the implements of torture used during his Passion and Crucifixion. Although Christ is depicted here *with* the Cross, he is not depicted *on* the Cross. In the Armenian Church, crosses that are used in liturgical practices, adorn the altar, are worn by clergy, or decorate the church typically do not contain the figure of Christ being crucified, since they represent the Cross *after* his Resurrection, as an instrument not of death but of salvation. (Thank you to Bp. Daniel Findikyan for this and the many other theological insights he has elucidated in sermons which I have had the privilege of hearing over the many years of our acquaintance.) Here, the Cross accompanies the resurrected Body (and Blood) of Christ in the chalice of the Eucharist.

The letters at the top of the Cross, ՅԵԹՇ, are an abbreviation of ՅԻՍՈՒՍ ՆԱԶՈՐԵՏԻ ԹԱԳԱՒՈՐ ՀՐԷԻՑ, “JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS”, with a Latin equivalent of INRI, abbreviating IESVS NAZARENVS REX IVDÆORVM, the title for Christ that Pontius Pilate wrote and placed on the Cross (John 19:19).

⁷² John 1:29.

⁷³ փրկիչ լեր (p'rich' ler), “save”, literally “be savior”, is an uncommon construction; “save” is typically expressed by the imperative verb փրկեա (p'rkea), which occurs a number of times in the hmayil. Grammatically, p'rich' ler should be followed by genitive/dative ծառայիս (tsarayis), “of/for this servant”, rather than the accusative զծառայս (ztsarays), “this servant”, in the text, which instead is appropriate for transitive p'rkea.

Part 3

◦ The Crucifixion of Christ.⁷⁴

* Սուրբ աստուած սուրբ և հզոր սուրբ և անմահ որ խաչեցար վասն մեր՝ ողորմեա՛ մեզ:⁷⁵

* Որ ծնար և յայտնեցար՝ ողորմեա՛ մեզ:

* Որ եկիր և գալոց ես՝ ողորմեա՛ մեզ:

* Որ մատնեցար և թաղեցար մարմնով՝ ի սիրտ երկրի և յարեար ի մեռելոց. և համբարձար փառոթ առ հայր՝ ողորմեա՛ մեզ:

* Որ եկիր և հանգեար յառաքեալսն՝ ողորմեա՛ մեզ:⁷⁶

* Որ յայտնեցար ի թաքօր լերինն՝ ողորմեա՛ մեզ:

* Որ եկիր ի փոխումն մօր քո և կուսի՝ ողորմեա՛ մեզ:

Ողորմեա՛ և պահեա՛ ամենայն չարեաց և աղանդաւորաց,⁷⁷ որ ի դիմաց ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name)⁷⁸



Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, who was crucified for us, have mercy on us.⁷⁵

Who was born and revealed, have mercy on us.

Who came and is to come, have mercy on us.

Who was betrayed and buried in the heart of the earth and rose from the dead, and ascended with glory to the Father, have mercy on us.

Who came and rested in the Apostles, have mercy on us.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ The base of the Cross appears to be the trunk of a tree (the Tree of Life), which transforms into the Cross above. Near the base is a chalice for the Blood of Christ. To the left of the chalice are the letters ԳՄ (GM) for Grigor Marzuanets'i, the artist who carved the illustration woodcut. With regard to the title at the top of the Cross, ՅԵԹՇ, see note 71 above.

⁷⁵ This part contains seven verses of the *sharakan* (hymn) *Surb Astuats* (Սուրբ Աստուած), "Holy God", the ancient Christian hymn of the *Trisagion*, or "Three Holies", which in the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church is sung during the Gospel Procession in the Liturgy of the Word. The different verses pertain to specific feast days in the Armenian Church. Interestingly, the hmayil does not include the familiar verse for Easter, Eastertide and Sundays of Resurrection: "Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, who rose from the dead, have mercy on us."

The verse "who was crucified for us" had been a point of contention, going back over a thousand years prior to this hmayil, between Chalcedonian and Non-Chalcedonian churches. Chalcedonian churches consider the hymn to be directed to Holy Trinity, and sing it as "Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us," without any feast-specific phrase. Non-Chalcedonian churches, including the Armenian Church, consider the hymn to be directed to God the Son, and thus include these and other subsidiary verses. Disagreement over these subsidiary verses, particularly "who was crucified for us," surfaced in many of the (often polemical) discussions between the Armenian and Byzantine churches through the centuries. See also note 77 below.

⁷⁶ This verse, which pertains to the Feast of Pentecost, is unique in that it is directed to the Holy Spirit.

Part 3

Who was revealed on Mount Tabor, have mercy on us.

Who came to take your mother and Virgin, have mercy on us.

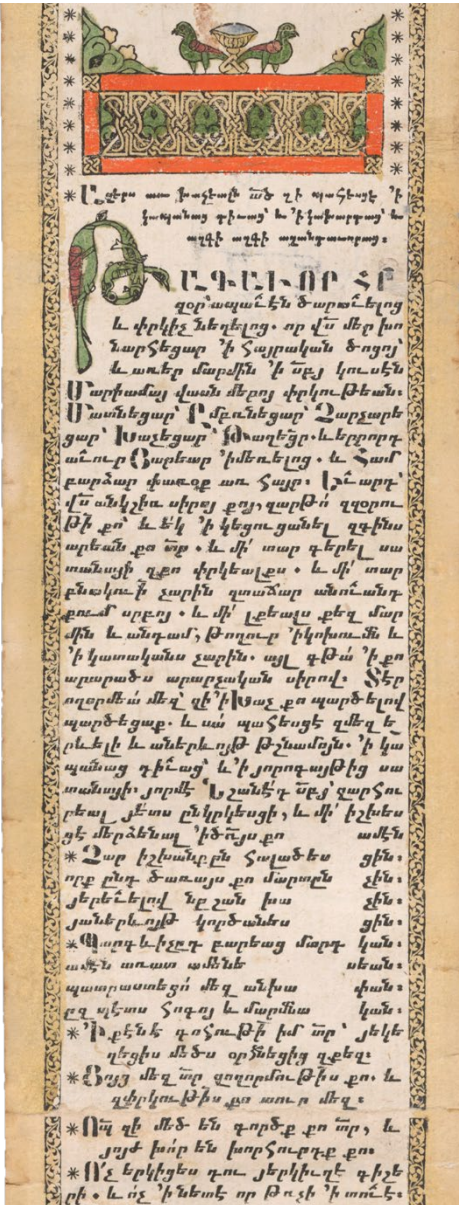
Have mercy and save [this servant] from all evil ones and sectarians,⁷⁷ who [are] in front of this servant of God (*name*).⁷⁸

⁷⁷ աղանդաւորաց (*aghandaworats'*), nom. աղանդաւոր (*aghandawor*), "sectarian", can also be rendered "enchanter", although "sectarian" seems appropriate here. At the time this hmayil was printed, many Armenians, particularly merchants, were in active interchange with Protestants and Catholics. With the Roman Catholic Church actively evangelizing in this period, some Armenians converted to Catholicism, especially as it facilitated their business dealings. In addition, heretical sects were still present at this time. Thus the request to be saved from sectarians, and the inclusion of the Armenian version of the *Trisagion*, with its different verses, can be seen as a reminder for the bearer of the hmayil to remain faithful to the traditional Armenian Church, even as he would have had frequent interaction with those belonging to other confessional communities. (Thank you to Dr. Arlen for this insight.)

⁷⁸ Since there is no specific protection afforded by this well-known hymn, it is followed here by an addendum to provide it to the named beneficiary (here unnamed). This addendum is not the formulaic "be helper and guardian...", but specifically relates to saving the beneficiary from all evil ones and sectarians.

Part 4

◦ Decorative pedestal with two birds.



* Աղերս առ խաչեալն աստուած զի պահեսցէ 'ի կապանաց դիւաց՝ և 'ի կախարդաց՝ և ազգի ազգի աղանդաւորաց:⁷⁹

ԹԱԳԱԲՈՐ Հօր՝ ապաւեն ծարաւելոց և փրկիչ նեղելոց. որ վասն մեր խոնարհեցար 'ի հայրական ծոցոյ՝ և առեր մարմին 'ի սրբոյ կուսէն Մարիամայ վասն մերոյ փրկութեան: Մատնեցար՝ Ըմբռնեցար՝ Չարչարեցար՝ Խաչեցար՝ Թաղեցար. և երրորդ աւուր Յարեար 'ի մեռելոց. և Համբարձար փառօք առ հայր: Եւ արդ՝ վասն անկշիռ սիրոյ քոյ, զարթո՛ զգօրութիւն քո՝ և եկ 'ի կեցուցանել զգինս արեան քո տէր:⁸⁰ և մի՛ տար գերել սատանայի զքո փրկեալքս. և մի՛ տար բնակութիւն չարին զտաճար անուանդ քում սրբոյ. և մի՛ լքեալս քեզ մարմին և անդամ,⁸¹ թողուր 'ի կոխումն և 'ի կատականս չարին. այլ գլխս 'ի քո արարածս արարչական սիրով: Տէր ողորմես մեզ՝ զի 'ի Խաչ քո պարծելով պարծեցար. և սա պահեսցէ զմեզ երեսիլ և աներեւոյթ թշնամոյն 'ի կապանաց դիւաց՝ և 'ի յորոգայթից սատանայի յորմէ՝ Նշանէ՛դ սրբ՝ զարհուրեալ յէտս ընկրկեսցի, և մի՛ իշխեսցէ մերձենալ 'ի ծնոյս քո ամէն:

* Չար իշխանքն հալածես ցին: որք ընդ ծառայս քո մարտն չին: յերեւելով նըշան խաչին: յաներևոյթ կործանես ցին:

* Պարգևիչդ բարեաց մարդ կան: առնէս առատ ամեն: պատրաստեցո՛ մեզ անխափան: բզ պէտս հոգոյ և մարմնա կան:

* 'Ի քեանէ գօհուքի իմ տր՝ յեկեղեցիս մեծս օրհնեցից զքեզ:

* Քոյց մեզ ար զողորմութիւն քո, և զփրկութիւն քո առուր մեզ:

* Ողբէ մեծ են գործք քո տր, և յոյժ խոր են խորհուրդք քո:

* Ոչ երկիցես դու յերկիւղէ գիշերի. և ոչ 'ի նետէ որ թռչի 'ի տուէ:⁸⁹

* Չար իշխանքն հալածես ցին:
որք ընդ ծառայս քո մարտն չին:
յերեւելով նըշան խաչին:
յաներևոյթ⁸⁴ կործանես ցին:

* Պարգևիչդ բարեաց մարդկան:
ամեն առատ ամենեսան:
պատրաստեցո՛ մեզ անխափան:
ըզպէտս հոգոյ և մարմնական:⁸⁵

* 'Ի քեն է գոհութիւն իմ տէր՝ յեկեղեցիս մեծս օրհնեցից զքեզ:⁸⁶

* Ցոյց մեզ տէր գողորմութիւնս քո. և զփրկութիւնս քո տուր մեզ:⁸⁷

* Որպէս զի մեծ են գործք քո տէր, և յոյժ խոր են խորհուրդք քո:⁸⁸

* Ոչ երկիցես դու յերկիւղէ գիշերի. և ոչ 'ի նետէ որ թռչի 'ի տուէ:⁸⁹

Supplication to the crucified God, that He may protect [us] from the

Part 4

bonds of demons, and from sorcerers and various sectarians.⁷⁹

Mighty king, refuge of those who thirst and savior of the oppressed, who for our sake humbly descended from the fatherly bosom, and took body from the holy Virgin Mary for our salvation. You were Betrayed, Seized, Tortured, Crucified, Buried, and on the third day Arose from the dead, and Ascended with glory to the Father. And now, on account of your immeasurable love, awaken your power and come to vivify the price of your blood, Lord.⁸⁰ And lead not those you delivered [into] captivity by Satan. And lead not the temple of your holy name [into] inhabitation by the evil one. And forsake not your body and member,⁸¹ [and] let [them] not be trampled under foot and into the mockery of the evil one. But take pity on your creatures with [your] love as creator.⁸² Lord have mercy on us, for we have pridefully boasted in your Cross.⁸³ And let this [Cross] protect us [from] enemies visible and invisible, from the bonds of demons, and from the snares of Satan. From [the Cross] your holy Sign, [the adversary] shall draw back terrified, and shall have no authority to come near this servant of yours (*name*). Amen.

Let the evil princes be driven off,
Who are battling with your servant;
By the sign of the Cross appearing,
Let them be cast down into disappearing.⁸⁴

Bestower of good things to mankind,
Truly abundant [unto] everyone,
Unfailingly prepare for us
The needs of soul and body.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ Variants of many texts in this hmayil, with commentary, can be found in Frédéric Feydit's *Amulettes de l'Arménie chrétienne* (*Amulets of Christian Armenia*). For this supplication, see Feydit: 130–133 (Text ԻԲ–XXII).

⁸⁰ “And come to vivify the price of your blood, Lord.” In the Crucifixion, the blood of Christ is the redemptive price that cancelled the sentence imposed by God for the original sin of Adam and Eve. Here, the supplicant asks the Lord to make this redemption power alive and thus able to save him.

⁸¹ “your body and member” reflects the Pauline view of the Church as the Body of Christ, with many members. Cf., for example, 1 Cor. 12:12–14, “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.” (NRSV.)

⁸² արարչական սիրով (*ararch'akan sirov*), “with [your] love as creator”. The NBHL defines the adjective *ararch'akan* as ‘particular/specific to a creator’. The phrase here refers the love that *only* the Creator can have toward his creatures.

⁸³ Cf. Gal. 6:14, “May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” (NRSV.)

⁸⁴ յաներևոյթ (*yanerewoyt'*), “into disappearing”, literally “into invisible”.

⁸⁵ մարմնական (*marmnakan*), “(of) body”, literally “bodily, carnal”. *Marmnakan* was apparently used here, instead of the genitive noun մարմնյ (*marmnony*), for the end rhyme pattern.

Part 4

To you is my thanksgiving, O Lord, in great congregations I will praise you.⁸⁶

Show us, O Lord, your mercy, and grant us your salvation.⁸⁷

How great are your deeds, O Lord! and very deep are your thoughts!⁸⁸

You will not be afraid of the terror of night; nor of an arrow that flies by day.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Psa. 22:25 (21:26 LXX); however, the text of the Psalm begins 'Ի քէն է գովութիւն իմ..., "From you is my praise...". Since the hmayil text has գովութիւն, "thanksgiving", we are reading the initial 'ի քէն, "from you", contextually as "to you". In addition, the word տէր, "O Lord", is not found in the Biblical text.

⁸⁷ Psa. 85:7 (84:8 LXX).

⁸⁸ Psa. 92:5 (91:6 LXX).

⁸⁹ Psa. 91:5 (90:5 LXX). This entire Psalm relates to God providing protection against evil.

Part 5

◦ Church of the Sepulchre.

* Բրիստոսի Գերեզմանն է *⁹⁰

*Տէր Յիսուս արժանի արա զամենայն հաւատացեալս անուանդ քում սրբոյ: զԹոյին Լուսաբուղիս սուրբ Գերեզմանդ մարմնաւոր աչօք տեսանել⁹¹ և համբուրել: Եւս առաւել զծառայս քո, (name)

* Աղօթք Տէրունական *

* Հայր մեր որ յերկիս՝ սուրբ եղիցի անուն քո. եկեսցէ արքայութիւն քո. եղիցին կամք քո որպէս յերկինս՝ և յերկրի. զհաց մեր հանապազորդ տուր մեզ այսօր. և թող մեզ զպարտիս մեր՝ որպէս և մեք թողունք մերոց պարտապանաց. և մի՛ տանիր զմեզ ՚ի փորձութիւն՝ այլ փրկեա՛ ՚ի չարէ. զո քո է արքայութիւն և զօրութիւն. և փառք յաւիտեանս⁹² ամէն:



It is the Sepulchre of Christ⁹⁰

Lord Jesus, make worthy all [those] believing in your holy name to see with corporeal eyes⁹¹ and kiss your Luminous holy Sepulchre. The more so [make worthy] this servant of yours, (name).

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who [art] in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver [us] from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory unto ages.⁹² Amen.

⁹⁰ See Feydit: 150–151 (Text ԻԹ–XXIX).

⁹¹ մարմնաւոր աչօք տեսանել (*marmnavor ach'ōk' tesanel*), “to see with corporeal eyes”, that is, to physically see the Holy Sepulchre during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

⁹² See note 58 above.

Part 6



- The Virgin Mary standing on a crescent moon, holding the infant Christ, and surrounded by radiant light.⁹³

* Աղերս առ սուրբ կոյսն մարիամ աստուածածինն:⁹⁴

Աստուածածին ամեն օրհնեալ:

ըզպաղատանս մեր ընկալ:

’ի հանգրստեան ժամու հասեալ:

առ քեզ գոչենք անձամբ թաղձեալ:

Բանին կենաց բարձօղ եղեր:

զաստուած մարմնով պարագրեցեր:

առ բանն աստուած բարեխօս լեր:

’ի փորձանաց ըզմեզ փրկել:

* Մայր աստուծոյ աղաչեմ զքեզ բարեխօս լեր առ ծնից-ելոյդ ’ի քէն, վասն ծառայի քո, (name)

⁹³ The Virgin Mary is depicted here as the Radiant Madonna, a later form of the iconographic theme known as the Woman of the Apocalypse, based on Chapter 12 of the Apocalypse of John (the Book of Revelation), which depicts the victory of the forces of God over those of evil. The Radiant Madonna form developed in Western Europe around the twelfth century, and became widespread in the Catholic Church. From there, the imagery migrated to Orthodox churches of the East, and eventually into this illustration by Grigor Marzuanets’i (note the letters ԳՐ (GR) in the clouds at the bottom-left of the illustration). Chapter 12 of the Apocalypse begins: “A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pangs, in the agony of giving birth. Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.” (NRSV.)

... The rest of this chapter [of the Apocalypse] describes the war between the forces of evil (the dragon and his cohorts) and those of God (Michael and his angels) and of course the woman. She was foretold at the beginning of the Bible in Genesis 3:15–16 as the one who, together with her Son, would crush the head of the serpent. The woman represents the Church as well as the Blessed Virgin. Both bring forth the children of God, who are to conquer evil and bring about the eventual complete triumph of God’s kingdom.

Art inspired by Apocalypse 12 has taken three forms. The earliest is of a narrative character, closely following the text of the book. ... In [manuscripts illustrations] we see the woman pursued by the dragon, who tries to sweep her away in the torrent flowing from his mouth. Then the woman, given wings, flees into the wilderness, and her child is snatched up to heaven. Michael and the heavenly host hurl the dragon down to the earth.

Later artists depict the woman alone, clothed with the sun (encircled by its rays) and crowned with stars. A further development shows the woman surrounded by the rays of the sun and in her arms carrying the Son she bore. ...

... In the Strahlenden radiant Madonnen, we have a third group of art works inspired by Chapter 12 of the Apocalypse. Another (radiant) adaptation of the Woman clothed with the sun, these are statues of the Madonna and Child surrounded by sunbursts, sometimes of great brilliance. They became quite numerous in the Rhineland and elsewhere in Germany, beginning with the end of the fifteenth century. (Roten, *passim*.)

Separate and distinct from the iconography of the Radiant Madonna–Woman of the Apocalypse, Mary is often associated with light, not only in artistic imagery, but also in allegorical writings related to the Incarnation. As Christ is depicted as the Sun of Righteousness (exegesis of Mal. 4:2), the Rising Sun that shines on those living in darkness (Luke 1:78–79), and the Light of the World (John 8:12, 9:5), the light of Christ likewise shines forth from Mary the Mother of God.

Part 6

Supplication to the holy Virgin Mary Bearer of God.⁹⁴

All-blessed Bearer of God,
Receive our entreaties
Reaching [you] at the rest hour.
With a grieving soul we cry out to you.
You became bearer of the Word of life;
You enclosed God with flesh.
Be intercessor to God the Word,
To deliver us from temptations.
Mother of God, I beseech you, be intercessor to the one born from
you, for the sake of your servant, (*name*).

⁹⁴ See Feydit: 156–157 (Text LṚ–XXXIV). See also note 65 above.

Part 7

*Ամեն ասեմ ձեզ՝ չէ՛ յարուցեալ ՚ի ծնունդս կանանց մեծ քան զյօհաննէս մկրտիչ: բայց փոքրիկն յարքայութեան երկնից մեծ է քան զնա:⁹⁶

◦ Saint John the Baptist holding a cross-staff, with a lamb.⁹⁵

*Աղերս առ սուրբ Կարապետն Յովհաննու:⁹⁷

*Այլ և բարեխօսութեամբ Սրբոյն Յովհաննու Կարապետին: Մովսէսի: Ահարօնի: Սամուէլի: Նաթանայ: Դաւթայ: Ամովսայ: Միքիայ: Աբդիու: Յունանու: Նաուումայ: Ամպակումայ: Սոփոնիայ: Չաքարիայ: Մաղաքիայ: Դանիէլի: Եւ ամենայն Սուրբ Մարգարէք: Օգնական լերուք ծառայիս աստուծոյ:⁹⁸



Truly I say to you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.⁹⁶

Supplication to Saint John the Forerunner.⁹⁷

Moreover, through the intercession of Saint John the Forerunner, [and] Moses, Aaron, Samuel, Nathan, David, Amos, Micah, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Zechariah, Malachi, Daniel, and all Holy Prophets, be helper to this servant of God.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ There is little in this illustration which would indicate that it depicts St. John the Baptist, other than its placement here with this text.

⁹⁶ Matt. 11:11.

⁹⁷ See Feydit: 160–163 (Text LQ–XXXVI, Var. F–B), and the notes there. The rendering “Supplication to Saint John...” is based on the preposition *ւո* (*ar*) in the title. However, the supplication is actually to God, since it does not seek help *from* St. John and the Holy Prophets, but rather help from God *through* their intercession. A more appropriate preposition, based on the text, would be *վասն* (*vasn*), “regarding” or “concerning”.

⁹⁸ The formulaic *ծառայիս աստուծոյ* (*tsar'ayis astutsoy*), “to this servant of God”, is followed by full *verjaket* sentence-stop (:), without leaving room for the name of the beneficiary to be written before the mark. This is likely a printing error, inasmuch as there is sufficient room for a name in the line of text, and other prayers end with no punctuation after *tsar'ayis astutsoy*.



- Saint Stephen the Protomartyr holding a miniature church and a censer.⁹⁹

* Աղերս առ սուրբ նախավկայն Ստեփաննոս:¹⁰⁰

Ի քէն հայցեմք արտասուագին:
 նախավկայ տեառն արարչին:
 սուրբ Ստեփաննոս բացօղ երկնին:
 տեսօղ զյեսուս յաջմէ ծնողին:¹⁰¹
 Լեր բարեխոս արեամբ քոյին:
 տալ մեզ հանգիստ 'ի յանկողնին:
 արթուն լինիլ առաւօտին:
 բարեբանել զլոյսն անքըննին:

Supplication to Saint Stephen the Protomartyr.¹⁰⁰

From you we ask weepingly,
 Protomartyr of the Lord Creator,
 Saint Stephen, opener of heaven,
 Seeing Jesus at the right hand of the Begetter:¹⁰¹
 Be intercessor through your blood,
 To give us rest in bed,
 To be alert in the morning,
 To praise the light of the unfathomable [one].

⁹⁹ St. Stephen, the first Deacon of the Church and the first martyr for Christ, is typically depicted beardless and holding a miniature church and censer, as here. He is also sometimes shown with a Gospel book, a martyr's palm frond, stones (the instruments of his martyrdom), and wearing deacons' vestments. The miniature church is in the style of Byzantine churches, which is not unexpected for a woodcut crafted in Constantinople. (Cf. the illustration in Appendix C, Fig. 25.)

Note also that in the foliage to the left of St. Stephen, there is a hole in the hmayil through which the backing paper, with printed letters in a Western alphabet, is visible.

¹⁰⁰ See Feydit: 192–193 (Text ԽԴ–XLIV).

¹⁰¹ Cf. Acts 7:55–56, “But filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ‘Look,’ he said, ‘I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’” (NRSV.)

Part 9

◦ Saint Gregory the Illuminator holding a bishop's crozier.¹⁰²

* Աղերս առ սուրբ Լուսաւորիչն Գրիգոր: ¹⁰³

Խընդրենք 'ի քէն հայր պատւական:

տէր սուրբ Գրիգոր պետ պարթեւան: ¹⁰⁴

լեր մեզ պարիսպ և օգնական:

'ի ժամ մարտի առ փորձութեան:

Ծընօղ բարի 'ի մեզ գըթա:

զգըրուեալ զորդիս քո ժողովեալ: ¹⁰⁵

'ի բանասարկուէն ըզմեզ փըրկեալ:

և 'ի բարին առաջնորդեալ: ¹⁰⁶ Եւ օգնական լեր

ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name) ¹⁰⁷



Supplication to Saint Gregory the Illuminator. ¹⁰³

We beseech from you, honorable father,

Lord Saint Gregory, Part'ew chief, ¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² In the tradition of the Armenian Church, St. Gregory the Illuminator (for whom see note 104 below) had a miraculous vision in which the hand of Christ descended from heaven and struck the ground with a golden hammer, with the image of a church appearing on that spot. He built a church at that location, which he called Etchmiadzin (Էջմիածին, *Ējmiatsin*), literally “the Only-Begotten came down”. Although the structure behind St. Gregory does not have a cross at its apex, it conceivably depicts the image of the church that appeared in his vision, with the birds representing the transmission of that image to his mind’s eye. Likewise, the quincunx-like figure on St. Gregory’s hand possibly represents the plan of the church. In the 1950s, archaeological remnants of the original fourth-century church were unearthed beneath the present Etchmiadzin cathedral, which was built in the 1600s.

¹⁰³ See Feydit: 196–197 (Text ԽԹ–XLIX).

¹⁰⁴ St. Gregory († ca. 330 A.D.) was the scion of a noble Parthian (Պարթեւ, *Part'ew*) family. According to historical tradition, when Gregory was an infant, his father Anak murdered the Arsacid (*Arshakuni*) King of Armenia, Khosrov II, at the behest of the Sassanid Persian king Artashir, who sought to expand his dominion over Armenia. When his father was subsequently captured and killed, Gregory escaped to Caesarea of Cappadocia with his nurse, where he was baptized and raised as a Christian. He returned to Armenia as an adult and entered the service of King Trdat (Tiridates) III, the son of the slain Khosrov, who with the support of the Romans (Greeks) had been restored to the Armenian throne. After a number of years in Trdat’s service, Gregory refused the king’s command to make an offering to the pagan goddess Ahanit, for which refusal he was put to torture. When it was also revealed that he was Anak’s son, he was thrown into the “deep pit” (խոր վիրապ, *khōr virap*) at Artashat, from which condemned prisoners never emerged. It is reported that Gregory survived in *khōr virap* for thirteen (or fifteen) years through the charity of widow, who in a dream was commanded to bake a loaf of bread and throw it into the pit every day. When he was finally released, Gregory cured Trdat from a disfiguring ailment with which he was afflicted after causing the martyrdom of Sts. Gayanē, Hrip’simē, and their companions. The king and his court thereupon converted to Christianity, and Armenia became an officially Christian realm (ca. 301 A.D.). St. Gregory thereafter evangelized throughout the land and converted many Armenians to Christianity, for which endeavors he acquired the epithet “the Illuminator” or “the Enlightener” (Լուսաւորիչ, *Lusaworich*). He is considered the first Chief Bishop or Catholicos of the Armenian Church (although the title Catholicos [կաթողիկոս (*kat’oghikos*), a borrowing of the Greek καθολικός (*katholikós*), which was the title given to a Metropolitan Bishop] did not come into general usage in Armenia until the fifth century). St. Gregory, his sons, and their descendants held the

Part 9

Be a rampart and helper for us,
In the time of war against temptation.
Good Begettor, take pity on us,
Gather your scattered children,¹⁰⁵
Deliver us from the Deceiver,
And direct us to the good.¹⁰⁶ And be helper to
this servant of God (*name*).¹⁰⁷

Catholicosate of the Armenian Church in a hereditary manner, almost continually, until 428 A.D. Thus he is identified here as “Part’ew chief” (պետ պարթևեան, *pet part’ewean*), that is, head or patriarch of this Part’ew ecclesiastic dynasty. For more on St. Gregory, see Agat’angeghos, Պատմութիւն Հայոց (*History of the Armenians*); critical edition of the Armenian text edited by K. Tēr Mkrtch’ean and S. Kanayeants’, Tiflis: 1909, reprinted Delmar, NY: Caravan Books, 1980; English translation by R. W. Thomson, *Agathangelos: History of the Armenians*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1974.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. John 11:51–52, ... այլ զի քահանայապետ էր տարւոյն այնորիկ, մարգարեացաւ եթէ մեռանելոց էր Յիսուս ՚ի վերայ ազգին: եւ ոչ ՚ի վերայ ազգին միայն, այլ զի եւ զորդիսն Աստուծոյ զգրուեալսն ժողովեացէ ՚ի մի: “... but since [Caiaphas] was chief priest that year, he prophesized that Jesus was [going] to die for the nation; and not for the nation only, but also that he would gather into one the scattered children of God.” The word զորդիսն (*zordisn*), “the children”, which translates the Greek τέκνα (*tékna*) in this passage, can also be rendered as “the sons”.

¹⁰⁶ Here the rhyming syllable is not separated from the word and placed at the right margin, in order to begin the formulaic “be helper...” sentence and leave sufficient space in the following line for the name of the beneficiary.

¹⁰⁷ St. Gregory is the fourth person listed by name in Armenian prayers of intercession, following, in sequence, the Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, and St. Stephen the Protomartyr (to whom prayers of intercession are found in Parts 6–8 of the *hmayil*). It is noteworthy that this supplication is not asking St. Gregory to *intercede* with God on behalf of the supplicant, as would be expected, but asks certain things of him that are normally asked of God, such as take pity on us or deliver us from the Deceiver. Likewise, the request to gather your scattered children apparently refers to Christ, since it relates to the children of God to be gathered by Jesus after his earthly death, in reference to John 11:51–52 (see note 105 above). Furthermore, and significantly, the fifth line of the supplication is addressed to “Good Begettor” (Ծնող բարի, *Tsēnogh bari*), which is typically understood to be God the Father. It is possible that this designation was intended to apply to St. Gregory, who, as the Illuminator of Armenia, can be considered the Begettor of that *Christian* nation, and as the founder of the Armenian Church, the Begettor of all those reborn into it by baptism.

Part 10

* Աղօթք Պահպանութեան * 108

* Հայր սուրբ՝ սրբեան զեա՝ Որդիս սուրբ պահեա՛ զիս։
Հոգիս սուրբ՝ մաքրեա՛ զիս։ Հոգի Բրիստոսի սրբեա՛ զիս։
Մարմին Բրիստոսի փրկեա՛ զիս։ Արիւն Բրիստոսի արբո՛
զիս։ Ջուր կողին Բրիստոսի լուա՛ զիս։ Խաչդ Բրիստոսի
պահեա՛ զիս։

* Ո՛վ բարի Յիսուս լո՛ւր ինձ՝ մի՛ մերժեր զիս 'ի քէն. և մի՛
թողուր զիս։ 'ի նենգութենէ չարին պահեա՛ զիս։ 'ի ժամ
մահուն կոչեա՛ զիս։ մերձ առ քեզ դիր զիս ընդ հրէշտակս
քո. և յամենայն չարէ պահեա՛ զճառայս քո (name)

* Աղօթք Պահպանութեան * 109

Տէ՛ր Յիսուս դու ես օգնական իմ և 'ի ձեռքս քո՛ եմ յամենայն
ժամ.¹¹⁰ և դու գիտես զօգուտն իմ. արդ՝ օգնեա՛ ինձ և մի՛
թողուր զիս կորնչել 'ի մեղս իմ. այլ գթա՛ 'ի ստեղծուածս
մաքուր ձեռաց քոց. և մի՛ ընկենուր զիս յերեսաց քոց¹¹¹
վասն մեղաց իմոց՝ զի առ քեզ ապաւինեցայ։¹¹² Բժիշկ
երկնաւոր՝ բժշկեա՛ զանձն¹¹³ իմ զի մեղայ քեզ.¹¹⁴ առաջի
քո՛ եմ ամենայն նեղիչք անձին իմոյ.¹¹⁵ և ոչ գոյ ինձ
ապաւեն բաց 'ի քէն՝ տէր տէր։ Կեցո՛ւ¹¹⁶ զիս ըստ ողորմու-
թեան քում,¹¹⁷ զի ամաչեսցեն ամենեքեան որք յարուցեալք
են 'ի վերայ իմ. և որք խնդրեն զանձն իմ կորուսանել՝ յետս
դարձցին.¹¹⁸ զի դու տէր կարօղ ես յամենայնի, և քեզ փառք
յաւիտեանս¹¹⁹ ամեն։

Prayer of Protection¹⁰⁸

Holy Father, sanctify me. Holy Son, protect me. Holy Spirit, purify
me. Spirit of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of
Christ, give me [to] drink. Water of the side of Christ, wash me.
Cross of Christ, protect me.

Oh! good Jesus hear me—do not push me away from you, and do
not abandon me. Protect me from the deception of the evil one. Call
me at the hour of death. Place me next to you with your angels. And
from all evil protect this servant of yours (name).

Prayer of Protection¹⁰⁹

Lord Jesus, you are my helper and I am in your hands at all times.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ See Feydit: 104–107 (Text ԺԱ–XI).

¹⁰⁹ See Feydit: 106–107 (Text ԺԲ–XII).

¹¹⁰ Cf. Ps. 119:109 (118:109 LXX), Անձն իմ 'ի ձեռքս քո յամենայն ժամ, եւ զօրէնս քո ես ոչ մոռացայ, "My soul [is] in your hands at all times, and I did not forget your law."

And you know [what is in] my interest. Now, help me and do not allow me to perish in my sins. But take pity on this pure creation of your hands. And do not cast me from your presence¹¹¹ on account of my sins, for I have taken refuge in you.¹¹² Heavenly physician, heal my soul¹¹³, for I sinned against you.¹¹⁴ Before you are all who afflict my soul.¹¹⁵ And there is no refuge for me, except from you, Lord, O Lord. Give me life¹¹⁶ according to your mercy,¹¹⁷ for everyone who has risen up against me shall be shamed. And those who seek my soul to destroy shall be turned back.¹¹⁸ For you, Lord, are capable of all things, and to you glory unto ages.¹¹⁹ Amen.

¹¹¹ Cf. Psa. 51:11 (50:13 LXX), Մի՛ ընկենուր զիս, Տէր յերեսաց քոց, եւ զՀոգի Սուրբ քո մի՛ հաներ յիմէն: “Do not cast me, O Lord, from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.”

¹¹² In a number of Psalms, the Lord and/or God is identified as the psalmist’s “refuge” (ապաւեն, *apawēn*). Cf., for example, Psa. 90:1 (89:1 LXX), Տէր, ապաւեն եղեր մեր ազգէ մինչեւ յազգ: “O Lord, you became our refuge from generation to generation.”; and Psa. 31:2 (30:3 LXX), ... լե՛ր իմ, Աստուած, պաշտպան եւ տուն ապաւինի ապրեցուցանել զիս: “... become, O God, my protector and house of refuge to save me.”

¹¹³ With regard to the word զանձն (*zandzn*), “soul”, see note 52 above.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Psa. 41:4 (40:5 LXX), Ես ասացի, Տէր, ողորմեա՛ ինձ, բժշկեա՛ զանձն իմ, ես մեղայ քեզ: “I said, ‘O Lord, have mercy on me; heal my soul, [for] I sinned against you.’”

¹¹⁵ Cf. Psa. 69:19 (68:20 LXX), Ձի դու գիտես զնախատինս իմ, զամօթ իմ եւ զպատկառանս իմ. առաջի քո եմ ամենայն նեղիչք անձին իմոյ: “For you know my reproach, my shame and my embarrassment; before you are all who afflict my soul.”

¹¹⁶ կեցո՛ղ (*kets’ō*), “give life”, the imperative form of the verb կեցուցանեմ (*kets’uts’anem*), “cause to live”, is often rendered “save”, which lacks the sense of the root կե-, ‘life’.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Psa. 6:4 (6:5 LXX), Դարձ, Տէր, եւ փրկեա՛ զանձն իմ, կեցո՛ղ զիս, Տէր, ըստ ողորմութեան քում: “Turn, O Lord, and rescue my soul; give me life, O Lord, according to your mercy.”

¹¹⁸ Cf. Psa. 40:15 (39:15 LXX), Ամաչեացեն եւ յամօթ լիցին ոյք խնդրէին զանձն իմ բառնալ զսա. դարձցին յեսս եւ ամաչեացեն որ խնդրէին ինձ չար: “Those who seek my soul to bear it away shall be shamed and embarrassed; those who seek evil for me shall be turned back and shamed.”

¹¹⁹ See note 58 above.

Part 11

- The Archangel Gabriel holding the soul of a deceased person.¹²⁰

*Վասն Հրեշտակաց Պահպանութեան:¹²¹

Գաբրիել Միքայել Ռաֆայել Դակուել Աթոնիել Բարակիել Փանուել Տածիել Սուզիել Սաղաթիել Սարագմիել Սարմիել Ուրիել Աննայել: Եւ ամենայն հրեշտակք և հրեշտակապետք որ ունիք իշխանութիւն 'ի վերայ ամենայն ցեղ¹²² սրի, դո՛ւք չորացուցէք որ եթէ հանդիպեսցի ընդ դեմ ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name) և Օգնական և պահապան եղերուք ամեն:

*Անուանք Հրեշտակաց *¹²³

Սարիել: Սարակմիել: Գուրիել: Գանձիել: Սեդրաք: Միսաք: Միսայել: Եզեկիայ: Գանձիայ: Սարմիայ: Ուրիել: Տածիել: Ուր այս անուանքս յիշեն անդ չար ո՛չ մերձենայ:¹²⁴ Օգնական և պահապան եղերուք ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name)



Regarding the Protection of Angels.¹²¹

Gabriel, Michael, Raphael, Dakuel, Athoniel, Barachiel, Phanuel, Taziel, Sugiel, Salathiel, Saragmiel, Sarmiel, Uriel, Hanael. And all

¹²⁰ Gabriel is the *grogh* (գրող), the “writer” of destinies who comes as the Angel of Death to take the souls of the deceased (Russell 2011: 23). Manuk Abeghyan (1865–1944), the great scholar of folklore, discusses the *grogh*:

... God has in his service an angel of death or certain spirits for taking a person’s soul. Thus when the preordained last day arrives, or when God wills it, the soul-taking (*hogear*) angel appears and the person surrenders his soul to him. If the individual is unwilling, then the *hogear* extracts it forcibly. Consequently, the angel is also known as soul-remover (*hogejan*). The soul-taker is frequently imagined as an angel, also known as *Grogh*, who travels all over the world implementing God’s command. Therefore it is considered sinful to curse *Grogh*. Often the archangel Gabriel appears as the soul-taker or *Grogh*. ...

The soul-taker does not remove the soul at one go. First he removes it [from the feet] to the knees, then up to the heart, then finally to the throat whence it is removed through the mouth. Thus the soul, which is perceived as a reflection of the person, is found dispersed throughout all parts of the body. According to another perception if the person was just, then his soul is removed gracefully by [one of the] two angels which sit on his shoulders. This type of death is seen as very easy: the good angel gives to the deceased a red apple or a bouquet of flowers and invites him to a place of joy as though to a wedding, and the man dies in great bliss, talking and laughing without experiencing any suffering. ... On the other hand, when the man is unjust, his soul is taken by the wicked angel who has recorded his evil deeds. This type of death is very painful. The person does not want to die and is tortured as he struggles against *Grogh*. The latter mercilessly attacks the dying person until finally he runs his sword through the dying person’s side and the soul comes out. The man dies immediately after this without the means of expressing his last wishes. (Abeghyan: 17–18.)

¹²¹ See Feydit: 214–215 (Text ԿԱ–LXI).

Part 11

angels and archangels who have authority over every type¹²² of sword, [may] you cause [it] to wither if it should come against this servant of God (*name*), and be helper and guardian. Amen.

Names of Angels¹²³

Sariel. Sarakmiel. Guriel. Ganziel. Sedrak. Misak. Mishael. Ezekias. Ganzias. Sarmias. Uriel. Taziel. Where these names are remembered, there evil does not approach.¹²⁴ Be helper and guardian of this servant of God (*name*).

¹²² ցնդ (*ts'egh*), "type", literally "tribe, clan".

¹²³ See Feydit: 218–219 (Text ԿԴ–LXIV).

¹²⁴ The names of the angels act as protective words to keep evil away. *Cf.* also the protection afforded by the angels' names in Part 26.



- Six-winged seraph holding an emblem with the letters ՄԲ ՄԲ ՄԲ ՏՐ.¹²⁵

* Աղօթք գլխացաւի և աչից ցաւի:¹²⁶

ԳԱՅՐ¹²⁷ ԳԵՏՆ ՅՈՐդանան և բերեր ծառ մի գեղեցիկ և պատուական, և եկեալ ծառն այն կանգնեալ 'ի մէջ գետոյն խաչանման:¹²⁸ և շուրջ ունեին զնովաւ սերօքէք և քերօքէքն՝ աղաղակեին բարձրաձայն և ասէին: սուրբ՝ սուրբ՝ սուրբ՝ Տէր զօրութեանց. լի՛ են երկինք և երկիր փառօք քո:¹²⁹

* Խնդրեին յաստուծոյ վասն ակին աչաց.¹³⁰ և ակնահարին. տանակին.¹³¹ դրուցակին.¹³² խաժուկին.¹³³ մեղուշակին.¹³⁴ և այլ ազգ չար ակին: գլխացաւի. և աչացաւի. խօլք խլի.¹³⁵ գնայունի. ծծացաւի.¹³⁶ և սրտացաւի. փորացաւի. միջաց ցաւի: և աղերսեին վասն փրկելոյ՝ յկէ պիղծ ցաւոց¹³⁷ որ պատահի 'ի մարդս: զոր և աղերսանօք քերօքէիցն՝ պահեսցէ և փրկեսցէ աստուած զճառայս իւր (*name*)

* Ողորմեա՛ ինձ տէր՝ զի հիւանդ եմ ես. բժշկեա՛ զանձն իմ զի խոռվեցան ոսկերք իմ:¹³⁸

* Լոյս տուր տէր աչաց իմոց, զի մի՛ երբէք ննջեցից 'ի մահ:¹³⁹

Prayer for head pain and eye pain.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ ՄԲ ՄԲ ՄԲ ՏՐ, abbreviating Սուրբ՝ Սուրբ՝ Սուրբ՝ Տէր (*Surb, Surb, Surb, Tēr*), “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord”, is the beginning of the song that the seraphim continually sing to God, from Rev. 4:8, “And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing, ‘Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.’” (NRSV.) See also the hmayil text and note 129 below.

¹²⁶ See Feydit: 338–341 (Text ԸԻԶ–CXXVI). In Armenian folk belief, “pains” to various body parts are evil spirits of disease known as *ts’awk’* (ցաւք). Manuk Abeghyan discusses *ts’aws* and the evil eye (չար աչքն, *ch’ar ach’k’*, or չար ալկն, *ch’ar akn*) as follows:

These two types of spirits in charm prayers are recalled and cursed together, since they have practically the same influence. The spirits of disease are called *ts’aws* (“pains”) and illnesses also are sometimes called *groghs*, just as the wicked angels of death. They personify diseases such as fever and plague, and are small creatures who wear triangular pointed hats. They have their own chief who knows which country and people God no longer wants to protect. [The chief] writes their names in his book or receives a similar book from God in which are already recorded the names of people who are fated to receive a certain disease or death. The chief collects his *groghs* or *ts’aws* and has them punish a country. ...

The most dangerous spirit of disease is the “evil eye,” which is a personification of “flickering lightning in the clouds.” The angry or frightening glance from this entity can harm not only humans and animals, but

Part 12

The River Jordan flowed here¹²⁷ and brought a beautiful and precious tree, and that tree arrived [and] rose up like a cross in the middle of the river.¹²⁸ And the seraphim and cherubim around it cried out in a loud voice and said: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts; heaven and earth are full of your glory.”¹²⁹

They asked God on account of the eye of eyes,¹³⁰ and the enchanted eye, the knife eye,¹³¹ the alien eye,¹³² the blueish eye,¹³³ the sweet

everything it encounters. ...

In Armenian folk beliefs, the “evil eye” plays an important role. As a being, he is a *dew*, the personification of evil itself, who roams everywhere and has 666 illnesses with which to harm people and spoil all good things. ...

The demon of the evil eye is usually perceived as a blonde man with blue eyes, sometimes as a black man with brown eyes. For example, one incantation says:

I have bound [the evil eye’s] arm and elbow
I have bound the blonde and black man.
I have bound them with triple-twisted hemp.
One I bound.
One I hanged.
One I hurled into the bottomless sea.

Another spell says:

The eye of the blue-eyed [demon] burst.
The eye of the dark-eyed [demon] burst.

Ordinarily, a man’s very blue or green eyes are considered evil. One should beware of people possessing them, for when they give someone else the evil eye, nothing that person does will succeed. ... Folk seek to eliminate such evil effects with various charms and spells. When people encounter men with the power of the evil eye, they spit and say: “This is for you, evil satan.” They also will spit on a rock and then turn it over, so that the influence of the evil eye transfers to the rock. This belief appears to be quite ancient. ... People who are bald, pale, one-eyed, cross-eyed, lame, blind, etc. are still considered dangerous, though not to the same extent as those possessing the evil eye. This is because all these physical flaws are seen as the result of evil influence. ...

... Often, in spells, the evil eye is sent to the fire: “The evil eye to the evil thorn; the evil thorn to the burning fire.” (Abeghyan: 122–127.)

A longer version of the foregoing spell is found in Part 13, in which evil is sent thence to the stone and to the bottomless sea.

¹²⁷ գայր (*gayr*), “flowed here”, literally “arrived”, that is, the water of the river arrived.

¹²⁸ This first sentence is saturated with religious imagery: the waters of the River Jordan, in which Christ was baptized and upon which the Holy Spirit came down, brings here the Tree of Life, which transforms into the Cross of Christ, the instrument of our salvation through his Crucifixion and Resurrection.

¹²⁹ The song from Rev. 4:8 (see note 125 above) is based on Isa. 6:3, “And one [seraph] called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.’” (NRSV.)

¹³⁰ ակին աչաց (*akin ach’ats’*), “of the eye of eyes”, possibly the evil eye *par excellence*, or the prototype of all evil eyes (J. R. Russell, personal communication, 22 January 2022). This common way of expressing a superlative in Armenian has its origin in the *shahanshah* of the Parthian empire. Other similar phrases include թագաւոր թագաւորաց (*t’agawor t’agaworats’*), “king of kings”; իշխան իշխանաց (*ishkhan ishkhanats’*), “prince of princes”; and յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից (*yawiteans yawitenits’*), “unto ages of ages”.

¹³¹ Reading տանակին (*tanakin*) as դանակին (*danakin*).

¹³² դրուցակին (*druts’akin*), “of the alien eye”, from դրուցակն (*druts’akn*) = ‘outer, outsider, alien eye (in the sense of the evil eye)’ (Harutyunyan: 457).

¹³³ For խաժուկին (*khazhukin*) read խաժակին (*khazhakin*), “of the bluish eye”, from խաժակն (*khazhakn*)

Part 12

eye,¹³⁴ and other kinds of evil eye. [And on account] of head pain, eye pain, deaf mutes [pain],¹³⁵ walking [pain], sinus pain,¹³⁶ heart pain, abdominal pain, [and] loin pain. And [they] entreated [God] to deliver [us from] 365 foul *ts'aws*¹³⁷ that befall men. Which also through the supplications of the cherubim, let God protect and save this servant of his (*name*).

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak. Heal my being, for my bones were troubled.¹³⁸

Give light, O Lord, to my eyes, that I will never sleep unto death.¹³⁹

= 'having bluish (light blue) eyes' (Harutyunyan: 462). See also note 126 above regarding the significance of blue eyes.

¹³⁴ մեղուշակին (*meghushakin*) "of the sweet eye", from մեղուշակն (*meghushakn*) = 'pleasant, sweet eye' (Harutyunyan: 469).

¹³⁵ խօլք (*khōlk'*), 'foolish, senseless, irrational (ones)', is contextually rendered "mutes", based on the associated word խլի (*khli*), nom. (խուլ) *khul*, 'deaf'. It is presumed that խօլք խլի (*khōlk' khli*), "(of) deaf mutes", refers to an evil-spirit of disease (*ts'aw*) that causes this condition.

¹³⁶ ծծազաւի (*tsats'awi*) is rendered "sinus pain", based on ծուծք (*tsutsk'*) = 'nostrils'.

¹³⁷ ՅԿԵ պիղծ ցաւոց, "365 foul *ts'aws*". See note 27 above in regard to the number 365. Some incantations include the names of various types of *ts'aws*, many of which are distorted and incomprehensible: *klkhivayr*, *klkhiver*, *gnayun*, *kerni*, *arik'en*, *keti* lion, *kulek*, *aghvisuk*, *dzernuk*, *khulek*, *khlanan*, *ach'k'unk'n*, *mach'ik*, *shutik*, *kortnik*, black *bazuk*, *khumian*, and *khots'unk*. (Harutyunyan: 117.)

¹³⁸ Psa. 6:2 (6:3 LXX). In this Psalm, the expression բժշկեա՛ւ զա՛նձն իմ (*bzhshkeá zandzn im*), "heal my being", translates the Greek ἰασαί με (*iasaí me*), "heal me". Cf. Psa. 41:4 (40:5 LXX), in which the same Armenian expression, բժշկեա՛ւ զա՛նձն իմ, translates the Greek ἰάσα τὴν ψυχὴν μου (*íasa tēn psychēn mou*), "heal my soul". With regard to the words ա՛նձն (*andzn*) and ψυχή (*psychē*), "being" or "soul", see note 52 above.

¹³⁹ Psa. 13:3 (12:4 LXX).

Part 13

* Աղօթք չար նազարի եւ չար լեզուի:¹⁴⁰

* Հրանիւթ: Հռափայել: Հրատն: Համատուն: Համակեզ: որ էք սպասաւորք աստուծոյ. դուք կապեցէք և պապանձեցուցէք զամենայն չար աչքն և զչար նիւթն և զչար խորհուրդն: Կապք և կախարդութիւնք ընդ դէմ ծառայիս աստուծոյ խափանեալ եղիցի: չար կամին չար աչքն 'ի չար փուշն. փոշն՝ 'ի բարկ կրակն. բարկ կրակն՝ 'ի քարն. քարն՝ 'ի անյատակ ծովն.¹⁴¹ և ամենայն չար աչք և չար նիւթ և չար լեզու և չար խորհուրդ և չար զգայարանքն՝ պատառի և խաւար դառնայ ընդ դէմ ծառայիս աստուծոյ:

* Աղօթք վասն ճանապարհորդաց:¹⁴²

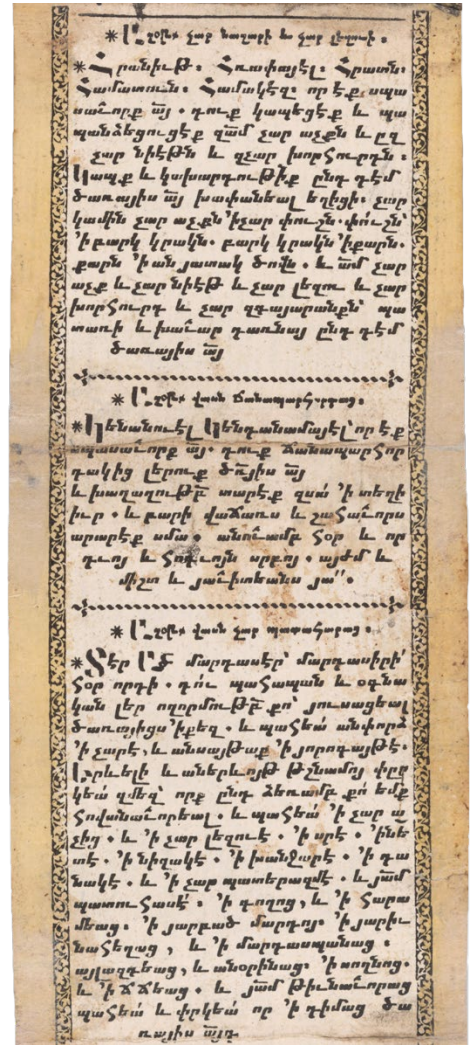
* Կենանուել Կենդանամայել՝ որ էք սպասաւորք աստուծոյ. դուք ճանապարհորդակից լերուք ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name) և խաղաղութեամբ տարէք զսա՝ 'ի տեղի իւր. և բարի վաճառս և շահաւորս արարէք սմա. անուամբ հօր և որդւոյ և հոգւոյն սրբոյ. այժմ և միշտ և յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից.¹⁴³ ամեն:

* Աղօթք վասն չար պատահարաց:¹⁴⁴

* Տէր Աստուած մարդասեր՝ մարդասիրի՛ հօր որդի. դո՛ւ պահապան և օգնական լեր ողորմութեամբ քո՝ յուսացեալ ծառայիցս 'ի քեզ. և պահեա՛ն անփորձ 'ի չարէ, և անսայթաք 'ի յորոգայթէ: Երևելի և աներևոյթ թշնամոյ փրկեա՛ն զմեզ՝ որք ընդ ձեռամբ քո՛ ենք հովանաւորեալ. և պահեա՛ն 'ի չար աչից. և 'ի չար լեզուէ. 'ի սրէ. 'ի նետէ. 'ի նիզակէ. 'ի խանջարէ. 'ի դանակէ. և 'ի չար պատերազմէ. և յամենայն պատուհասէ՝ 'ի գողոց, և 'ի հարամեաց:¹⁴⁵ 'ի յարբած մարդոյ: 'ի յարիւնահեղաց, և 'ի մարդասպանաց: այլազդեաց,¹⁴⁶ և անօրինաց:¹⁴⁷ 'ի սողնոց. և 'ի ճճեաց. և յամենայն թիւնաւորաց պահեա՛ն և փրկեա՛ն որ 'ի դիմաց ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name) ամեն:

Prayer for the evil glance and evil tongue.¹⁴⁰

Raniuth, Raphael, Raten, Hamatoun, [and] Hamakez, who are [angelic] attendants of God, you bind and muzzle every evil eye and evil desire and evil thought. Let the bindings and enchantments against this servant of God be obstructed. They intend evil—the



¹⁴⁰ See Feydit: 226–227 (Text ՀՄ–LXXI). չար նազար (*ch'ar nazar*), “evil glance”, literally “evil evil-eye”. The word *nazar*, “evil eye” (for which, see note 126 above), was borrowed into Middle Armenian from Arabic *nadar* (MHB, s.v. նազար).

Part 13

evil eye to the evil thorn, the thorn to the caustic fire, the caustic fire to the stone, the stone to the bottomless sea¹⁴¹—and every evil eye and evil desire and evil tongue and evil thought and evil sentiment against this servant of God (*name*) turns to particle and darkness.

Prayer for travelers.¹⁴²

Kenanuel [and] Kendanamael, who are [angelic] attendants of God, be fellow travelers of this servant of God (*name*), and take this one to his place with peace, and make his trade good and profitable, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.¹⁴³ Amen.

Prayer for evil occurrences.¹⁴⁴

Lord God who loves mankind, Son of the Father who loves mankind, be guardian and helper, through your mercy, of us servants who hope in you. And keep [us] untested by evil, and from stumbling [into] a trap. Save us [from] the visible and invisible enemy, we who have taken shelter under your hand. And protect [us] from the evil eye and the evil tongue, from sword, arrow [and] lance, from perturbation, from a dagger, from evil war, and from all chastisement, from thieves, and *haram* ones,¹⁴⁵ from a drunken man, from blood-shedders and man-killers, from foreigners,¹⁴⁶ and from lawless ones.¹⁴⁷ Protect and save [this servant] from creeping things, worms, and everything venomous, which [are] in front of this servant of God (*name*).

¹⁴¹ See Feydit: 358–361 (Text ԺԽԲ–CXLII). The angels invoke an incantation, known in Armenian folk tradition (Abeghyan: 127), by which they “intend evil” (չար կամին, *ch’ar kamin*) to be gone, and never return: “the evil eye to the evil thorn, the thorn to the caustic fire, the caustic fire to the stone, the stone to the bottomless sea.”

¹⁴² See Feydit: 232–235 (Text ԸԶ–LXXVI).

¹⁴³ See note 58 above.

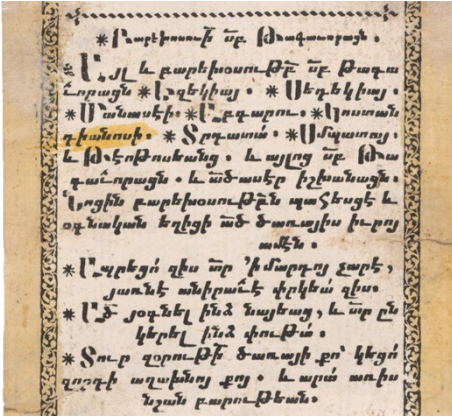
¹⁴⁴ See Feydit: 122–123 (Text ԺԷ–XVII).

¹⁴⁵ հարամեաց (*haramesats’*), nom. հարամ (*haram*), “forbidden”, “impure”, “dishonest”, “filthy” or “vile”, was borrowed into Middle Armenian from Arabic *harām* (*MHB*, s.v. հարամ).

¹⁴⁶ For ալլազդեաց (*aylazdeats’*), read ալլազգեաց (*aylazgeats’*), nom. ալլազգի (*aylazgi*) “foreigner”, which is used in the Armenian Bible for Philistine. In later times, the word was used to refer in general to Muslims, whether Persians, Arabs or Turks.

¹⁴⁷ անօրինաց (*anōrinats’*), nom. անօրեն (*anōrēn*), “lawless”, is often rendered “impious”.

Part 14



* Բարեխոսութիւն սուրբ Թագաւորացն:¹⁴⁸

* Այլ և բարեխոսութեամբ սուրբ Թագաւորացն * Եզեկիայ:
* Սեդեկիայ: * Մանասէի: * Աբգարու: * Կոստանդիանոսի:
* Տրդատա: * Սմայատայ: և Թեոթոսեանց: և այլոց սուրբ
Թագաւորացն. և աստուածասէր իշխանացն: Նոցին
բարեխոսութեամբն պահեսցէ և օգնական եղիցի աստ-
ուած ծառայիս իւրոյ (name) ամեն:

* Ապրեցո՛ղ զիս տէր 'ի մարդոյ չարէ, յառնէ անիրաւէ
փրկեա՛ղ զիս:¹⁴⁹

* Աստուած յօգնել ինձ նայեաց, և տէր ընկերել ինձ
փութա՛ւ:¹⁵⁰

* Տուր զօրութիւն ծառայի քո՛ւ կեցո՛ղ¹⁵¹ զորդի աղախնոյ քոյ:
և արա՛ առ իս նշան բարութեան:¹⁵²

Intercession of the holy Kings.¹⁴⁸

Moreover, through the intercession of the holy kings Hezekiah, Zedekiah, Manasseh, Abgar, Constantine, Trdat, Smpat, and the Theodosiuses, and of the other holy Kings and God-loving princes. Through the intercession of those same ones, let God protect and be a helper of this servant of his (name). Amen.

Rescue me, O Lord, from the evil man, save me from the unjust man.¹⁴⁹

O God, attend to help me, and O Lord, hasten to assist me.¹⁵⁰

Give power to your servant, save¹⁵¹ the son of your maidservant. And make near me the sign for goodness.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ See Feydit: 174–177 (Text LQ–XXXVI, Var. ԺԳ–M), and the notes there.

¹⁴⁹ Psa. 140:1 (139:2 LXX).

¹⁵⁰ Psa. 70:1 (69:2 LXX).

¹⁵¹ See note 116 above.

¹⁵² Psa. 86:16–17 (85:16 LXX).

Part 15

- Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac, an angel stopping him from doing so, and the sheep of sacrifice which appeared.¹⁵³
- Intersecting diagonal texts, which create a cross-hatched pattern, with a cross symbol in each of the squares created by the pattern.¹⁵⁴



The first text starts diagonally ✓ at the top of the cross-hatched section, and continues in the following parallel diagonal ✓ lines:



At the bottom of the cross-hatched section, the text continues from the last diagonal ✓ line, to the right-side column below:



*Եւ Էառ Աբրահամ զորդին իւր իսահակ և տարաւ ՚ի զենիս իւր. և ասէ Իսահակ որդին ցիայրն: Հայր իմ ահա փայտ և ահա հուր, ո՛ր է ոչխար ողջակէզ. և ասէ արբահամ ցորդին իւր իսահակ՝ որդեակ իմ աստուած տեսանէ ոչխար իւր ողջակէզ:¹⁵⁵ յայնժամ առեալ զսուրն իւր և կամեր զենուլ զորդին իւր: և ահա՛ երևեցաւ հրեշտակ տաւան առ կաղնեան մամբրեի¹⁵⁶ և ասէ՝ արբահամ արբահամ մի՛ միսեր զձեռն քո ՚ի պատանեակդ յայդ. և նոյն ժամայն տեսեալ ՚ի ծառոյն յայնմիկ կախեալ

¹⁵³ At the bottom-right are the letters ԳՐ (GR) for Grigor Marzuanets'i, the artist who carved the illustration woodcut.

¹⁵⁴ Prof. James R. Russell states that the cross-hatched pattern “produce[s] innumerable crosses, in the manner also of the magic squares filled with numbers and symbols that also abound in Armenian and other magical books.” (Russell 2011: 17.) See also note 161 below. For portions of other hmayils with similar texts (Abraham and Isaac, divine Holy Signs) in cross-hatched patterns, see Appendix C, Figs. 4, 20 and 27.



խոյ¹⁵⁷ ողջակեզ յայնժամ առեալ գորդին իւր ուրախութեամբ օրհներ զաստուած և ասէր տէր երևեցաւ 'ի տեղիս այսմիկ. և կոչեաց արքայիս համ տեղին այն զի տէր երևեցաւ.¹⁵⁸ և սառայ ետես գորդին իւր և ուրախ եղև յոյժ ուրախութեամբ մեծաւ: և սահակ ծերացեալ ալեօք ծաղկեցաւ և հանգեալ խաղաղութեամբ 'ի տէր: Բարեխօսութեամբ նահապետին հօրն մերում արքայիս համ. և որդւոյ նորին իսահակայ Օգնեսցէ քրիստոս աստուած մեր առ ծառայս իւր (name) և Փրկեսցէ ամենայն չարեաց. և ամրածածուկ աջօվն իւրով պարսպեալ պահեսցէ անխռով մինչև 'ի խորին¹⁵⁹ ծերութիւնն. և 'ի հանդերձելումն¹⁶⁰ երկնից արքայութիւնն պարգևեսցէ ամեն:

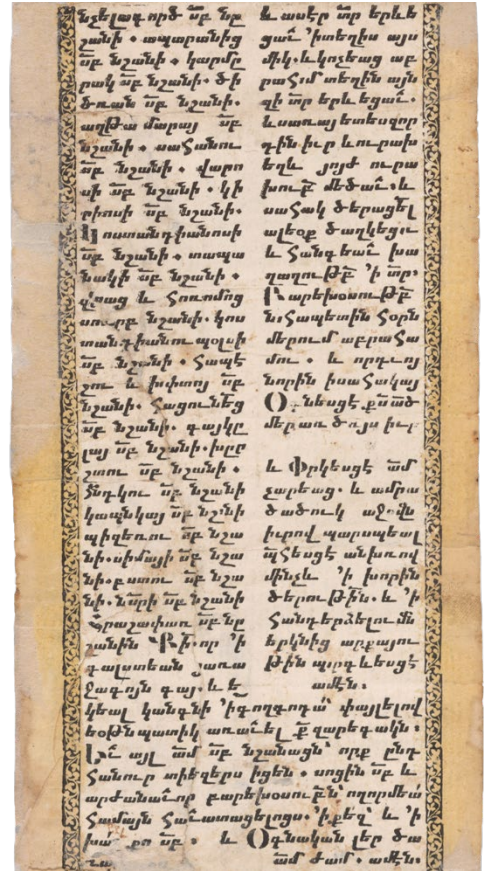
The second text starts diagonally ↖ at the top of the cross-hatched section, and continues in the following parallel diagonal ↘ lines.



At the bottom of the cross-hatched section, the text continues from the last diagonal ↘ line, to the left-side column below:



Բարեխօսութեամբ և Աստուածային սուրբ նշանացն քրիստոսի աստուծոյ մերոյ և անբարբառ բարեխօսացն վասն ազգի մարդկան սուրբ իսաչքն ամենայն:¹⁶¹ նախ աւագակի¹⁶² սուրբ նշանի. վարագա¹⁶³ սուրբ նշանի. պատերազմի¹⁶⁴ սուրբ նշանի. երևման¹⁶⁵ սուրբ նշանի. հաղթաթայ սուրբ նշանի վանկոյ սուրբ նշանի. կաղբայ սուրբ նշանի. արգինեայ սուրբ նշանի անիսերեխ սուրբ նշանի. մարառա սուրբ նշանի զանձասարա սուրբ նշանի: ջալէ թու թուիս մանուկին¹⁶⁶ և քրիստոսի սուրբ գեղարդին.¹⁶⁷ տէրունական սուրբ նշանի գոռ սուրբ նշանի: գետարգել սուրբ նշանի.¹⁶⁸ սքանչելագործ սուրբ նշանի. ապարանից սուրբ նշանի.¹⁶⁹ կարմրակ սուրբ նշանի. ծիծռան սուրբ նշանի. աղթամարայ սուրբ նշանի. սահանու սուրբ նշանի. վարոսի սուրբ նշանի. կիրիոսի սուրբ նշանի. Կոստանդիանոսի սուրբ նշանի. տապ-



անակի սուրբ նշանի. Վրաց և հռոմոց սուրբ նշանի. կոստանդիանուպոլիս սուրբ նշանի. հապէշու և խփտոյ սուրբ նշանի. հացունեաց սուրբ նշանի. գայկլայ սուրբ նշանի. խրշտու սուրբ նշանի. մնդկու սուրբ նշանի կապնկայ սուրբ նշանի պիզենու սուրբ նշանի. սիմայի սուրբ նշանի. բստու սուրբ նշանի. նսարի սուրբ նշանի Հրաշափառ սուրբ նշանին Քրիստոսի. որ 'ի զալստեան յառաջագոյն գայ. և եկեալ կանգնի 'ի գողգոթա՝ փայլելով եօթնպատիկ առաւել քան զարեգակն: Եւ այլ ամենայն սուրբ նշանացն՝ որք ընդ հանուր տիեզերս իցեն. սոցին սուրբ և արժանաւոր բարեխօսութեամբն՝ ողորմեա՛ համայն հաւատացելոցս. 'ի քեզ՝ և 'ի խաչ քո սուրբ: և Օգնական լեր ծառայիս քո¹⁷⁰ (name) ամենայն ժամ. ամէն:

And Abraham took his son Isaac and carried [him] away to his sacrifice. And Isaac the son said to the father, “My father, behold! the wood and behold! the fire. Where is the sheep for the burnt offering?” And Abraham said to his son Isaac, “My little son, God sees his sheep [for] the burnt offering.”¹⁵⁵ Then, [Abraham] took his knife, and intended to sacrifice his son. And behold! an angel of the Lord appeared near the oak of Mambre,¹⁵⁶ and said, “Abraham, Abraham, do not plunge your hand into this lad!” And [at] that same time, [Abraham] saw a ram [for] the burnt offering hanging on that tree,¹⁵⁷ then [he] took his son with rejoicing [and] blessed God and said “the Lord appeared in this place.” And Abraham called the place “that [in] which the Lord appeared.”¹⁵⁸ And Sarah saw her

¹⁵⁵ Աստուած տեսանէ ոչխար իւր ողջակէզ, “God sees his sheep [for] the burnt offering.” Cf. Gen. 22:8, Աստուած տեսցէ իւր ոչխար յողջակէզ, “God will see his sheep for the burnt offering.” In the hmayil narrative, Abraham’s statement is made just before the sacrifice is about to occur, and the present form տեսանէ (*tesanē*), “(God) sees”, is used. The Biblical text uses the subjunctive form տեսցէ (*tests’ē*), “(God) will see”, since the statement occurs before they set out for the place of sacrifice.

¹⁵⁶ The Armenian version of Genesis, based on the Septuagint, does not indicate the location where the sacrifice was to take place, only stating that God instructed Abraham to go “to the high land” (յերկիր բարձր, Gen. 22:2). Other Bible versions identify this location as the “land of Moriah”. The oak of Mambre (Mamre in versions based on the Masoretic Text) mentioned here is the location where the three heavenly visitors told Abraham and Sarah that she will bear a son (Gen. 18).

¹⁵⁷ In the Armenian Bible, the ram is hanging by its horns in a tree, not caught in a thicket as in other Bible versions. Cf. Gen. 22:13, Համբարձ Աբրահամ զաչս իւր եւ ետես, եւ տեսա խոյ մի կախեալ կայր զծառոյն սաբեկայ զեղջերաց, “Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold! a ram stood hanging in the sabek tree by the horns.” The ram hanging in a tree is sometimes depicted in manuscript illuminations and printed illustrations (see, for example, Appendix C, Fig. 27A). In Christianity, the Sacrifice of Isaac is seen as a prefiguration of the Crucifixion of Christ, and in the tradition of the Armenian Church, the Cross is often identified with a tree (see the illustration in Part 3 and note 74 above, and the imagery in the text which begins Part 12). The imagery of the ram for burnt offering hanging on a tree is thus a typological precursor to Christ on the Cross.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Gen. 22:14 (Armenian version), Եւ կոչեաց Աբրահամ զանուն տեղւոյն այնորիկ Տէր ետես. զի

son and became very glad with great rejoicing. And Isaac, aged with white hair, flourished, and [finally] rested in peace in the Lord. Through the intercession of our father the patriarch Abraham, and of that same one's son Isaac, let Christ our God give help to this servant of his (*name*), and let [Christ] save [him from] all evils. And fortified by his right hand encircling [this servant] as a rampart, let [Christ] keep [him] untroubled until his ripe¹⁵⁹ old age. And in the world to come,¹⁶⁰ let [Christ] bestow the kingdom of heaven [to this servant]. Amen.

Through the intercession also of the Divine Holy Signs of Christ our God, and of the voiceless intercessors for the sake of the human race, all the Holy Crosses:¹⁶¹ the Holy Sign of the First Thief,¹⁶² the Holy Sign of Varag,¹⁶³ the Holy Sign of War,¹⁶⁴ the Holy Sign of the

ասիցեն ցախօր. Ի լերինն յայնմիկ Տէր երեւեցաւ, “And Abraham called the name of that place ‘The Lord saw,’ that they might say to this day, ‘On that mountain the Lord appeared.’” Other Bible versions refer to this place as “Jehovah-jireh” (*KJV*), which in Hebrew means “the Lord will provide” (as rendered in the *NRSV*).

¹⁵⁹ խորին (*khorin*), “ripe”, literally “deep, extreme, profound”.

¹⁶⁰ 'ի հանդերձելումն (*i handerdzelumn*), “in the world to come”, literally “in the prepared (thing)”, from հանդերձեմ (*handerdzem*), ‘prepare, make ready’.

¹⁶¹ Holy Sign (սուրբ նշան, *surb nshan*) is generally synonymous with Holy Cross (սուրբ խաչ, *surb khach*'), often with regard to a specific relic of the True Cross, with a name that refers to the place in which the relic was kept, a historical figure who possessed it, or a miraculous event related to the Cross. See Feydit: 132–145 (Text ԻԳ–XXIII), and the notes there with regard to specific Holy Signs, some of which are discussed below. According to Prof. James R. Russell, these named Holy Signs are found in hmayils:

... in the course of a lengthy prayer addressed to the Holy Cross itself and to the sacred Crosses or relics of the True Cross in Armenia (between 266 and 365 in number—and meant, thus, to correspond to the days of the year and the traditional numeration of the parts of the human body). The invocation is typical of the extreme reverence, verging on idolatry, with which the Armenian Orthodox Christians regard the Holy Sign. The visual form of the text is interesting, described by Feydit as “écriture croisée”: the Biblical narrative of the binding of Isaac from Genesis (which Christians consider a prefiguring of the Crucifixion) runs in parallel lines slanting down from left to right, over the list of Crosses, which slants upwards. In this way, the text itself acquires the iconic power of the countless interconnected crosses formed by the intersecting lines of script, and the litany of crosses provides an insistent, powerful background percussive beat to the foreground of the Old Testament scene. (Russell 1998: 329–330.)

¹⁶² The Holy Sign of the First Thief refers to the cross next to Christ on which the penitent thief was crucified (Luke 23:39–43).

¹⁶³ This relic of the True Cross, which was located at Varag monastery, is celebrated by the Armenian Church with the Feast of the Holy Cross of Varag, one of the five feasts of the Church dedicated to the Holy Cross. For more information on the discovery of this particular relic in the seventh century, its later association with St. Hrip'simē (who was martyred with St. Gayanē and their companions, which event led to the conversion of King Trdat III to Christianity *ca.* 301 A.D.), and its importance first to the lords of ʔshtunik' and then to the Artsruni rulers of the medieval Armenian kingdom of Vaspurakan, see Zaroui Pogossian, “Relics, Rulers, Patronage: the True Cross of Varag and the Church of the Holy Cross on Ałt'amar”, in *The Church of the Holy Cross of Ałt'amar*, Leiden: Brill, 2019, pp. 126–206.

¹⁶⁴ The Holy Sign of War possibly refers to the vision of a cross of light seen by the Emperor Constantine prior to the battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 A.D., as recorded by Eusebius in his *Life of Constantine* (thank you to Dr. Arlen for this insight). It may also refer to a fragment of the True Cross that was carried in battle. According to fifteenth-century scribal colophons, the Holy Sign of War, which may also have been called the Miracle-Worker

Apparition,¹⁶⁵ the Holy Sign of Haghat', the Holy Sign of Vanik, the Holy Sign of Gaghep, the Holy Sign of Argine, the Holy Sign of Aniserekh, the Holy Sign of Marat', the Holy Sign of Gandzasar, the Jalēt' T'ukh Manuk¹⁶⁶ and the Holy Lance of Christ,¹⁶⁷ the Dominical Holy Sign, the Holy Sign of Keṛ, the Getargel Holy Sign,¹⁶⁸ the Miracle-Worker Holy Sign, the Holy Sign of Aparank',¹⁶⁹ the Holy

Holy Sign, was located at Artskē monastery (Feydit: 135, n. 6, citing Pirghalemian). A Miracle-Worker Holy Sign is also listed in the hmayil text further below.

¹⁶⁵ The Holy Sign of the Apparition refers to the appearance on May 19, 351, of a luminous cross in the sky over Jerusalem, which was described in a letter from St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, to the Emperor Constantine. This event is celebrated in the Armenian Church with the Feast of the Apparition of the Holy Cross, another of the five feasts of the Church dedicated to the Holy Cross.

¹⁶⁶ ջալէթոյ թուխ մանուկին (*jalēt'u t'ukh manukin*), "(of) the Jalēt' T'ukh Manuk", reading what appears to be two words in the hmayil (ջալէ թու) as a single word. The text in Feydit reads ջալէթոյ թուխ մանուկին (*jalet'u t'ukh manukin*), and he notes that half of the manuscripts have ջալէթոյ թուխ (*jalet'u t'ukh*) and the other half have ջալէթուխ (*jalet'ukh*) (Feydit: 134, n. 10), apparently a scribal conflation of those two words.

The T'ukh Manuk, "Black Youth", is the mischievous main character in a number of Armenian folk tales, and the name has come to refer also to small shrines located in remote areas of Armenia, often on a mountain or near a spring (Russell 1998: 319–321). In the context of Holy Signs, T'ukh Manuk refers to a cross associated with one of these shrines, or otherwise named after the T'ukh Manuk.

The phrase "(of) the Jalēt' T'ukh Manuk" can be interpreted in two ways: either as a T'ukh Manuk cross at Jalēt', or as a cross located at Jalēt' and a separate T'ukh Manuk cross located elsewhere. Feydit follows the latter interpretation, rendering the Armenian text as "du saint signe de l'Enfant au teint bistre [, du saint signe] de Djaleth" (*of the holy sign of the Black Youth [, of the holy sign] of Jalēt'*), and he notes that a cross named after the Black Youth existed in the village of Satou (*Sadu gegh*), a place of pilgrimage for the inhabitants of Diyarbakır (Feydit: 137–139, n. 17, citing P. Oskian). (In his rendering, Feydit adds "of the holy sign" twice, but only distinguishes the second addition with brackets.) Feydit also notes that the monastery of Jalēt' existed in 1411, and that a 1779 manuscript states that it was written in the village of Jalēt' near the Church of the Holy Virgin and the Holy Sign of the Black Youth (Feydit: 139, n. 18, citing Kostaniantz and N. Bogharian), which supports the former interpretation. Given the bifurcated appearance of the word ջալէթոյ in the hmayil and the conflation of the words ջալէթոյ and թուխ in a number of manuscripts, and considering the fact that holy relics were sometimes translated from place to place or became lost over time, and that traditions regarding holy relics likewise changed or were forgotten, it is likely that the scribes or printers were unaware of the particular cross or crosses to which Jalēt' T'ukh Manuk referred. Thus we have transliterated the phrase without any interpretative additions.

¹⁶⁷ In the tradition of the Armenian Church, the head of the lance or spear that pierced Christ's side (John 19:34) was brought to Armenia by the Apostle Thaddeus when he evangelized in that region in the first century. This holy relic is currently kept at the Etchmiadzin cathedral of the Armenian Church in Yerevan, and is occasionally presented or used in certain special liturgical rites. The importance of the relic is reflected by the fact that although it is not a fragment of the True Cross, it is included here with the named Holy Signs.

¹⁶⁸ գետարգել սուրբ նշանի (*getargel surb nshani*), "(of) the Getargel Holy Sign", literally "the Holy Sign that Stopped the River". This relic of the True Cross, which according to tradition was given by Emperor Constantine to St. Gregory the Illuminator, was used by Catholicos Petros I (sed. 1019–1058) in a water-blessing rite in Trebizond on January 6, 1021, during which the Cross miraculously stopped or reversed the flow of the Chorokh (Akampsis) river, and for which Catholicos Petros was given the epithet *Getadardz* (Գետադարձ), "Who Reverses the River" (Feydit: 139, n. 22, citing Hatsouni and Lalayan).

¹⁶⁹ According to tradition, this relic of the True Cross was given by the Co-Emperors Basil II and Constantine VIII (r. 976–1025) to an unnamed uncle of Step'anos, Bishop of Mokk'. It was memorialized in poetic prose by St. Gregory of Narek in a historical encomium entitled *History of the Holy Cross of Aparank'* (Պատմութիւն

Sign of Karmrak, the Holy Sign of Tsitsran, the Holy Sign of Aght'amar, the Holy Sign of Sahan, the Holy Sign of Varus, the Holy Sign of Cyrus, the Holy Sign of Constantine, the Holy Sign of the Ark, the Holy Sign of the Georgians and Romans, the Holy Sign of Constantinople, the Abyssinian and Coptic Holy Sign, the Holy Sign of Hats'unik', the Holy Sign of Gaykil, the Holy Sign of Khrit, the Holy Sign of Mndik, the Holy Sign of Kapnik, the Holy Sign of Pizeṛ, the Holy Sign of Simay, the Holy Sign of Pest, the Holy Sign of Nsar. Miraculous Holy Sign of Christ, which arrives at the first coming [of Christ], and comes and rises up at Golgotha, shining seven times brighter than the sun. And all the other Holy Signs, which are throughout the entire universe, through the intercession of these same ones, have mercy on all these who believe in you and in your Holy Cross. And be helper to this servant of yours¹⁷⁰ (*name*) all the time. Amen.

Ապարանից Սուրբ Խաչին), which he describes as “a historical record of the divine cross, the almighty sign, which by providential guidance—foreseen from on high—was brought from the southern regions of the Greeks and kept within the boundaries of the district of Mokk', in the abode of the holy brotherhood at the place called Aparank'.” The *History* is part of a panegyric work, which also includes an *Encomium on the Holy Cross* and an *Encomium on the Holy Virgin*, that was commissioned by St. Gregory's patron Bishop Step'anos, and which Gregory describes in the colophon as “my small book of little significance.” (Terian 2016: 223–243, 367–369.)

¹⁷⁰ There is a lacuna in the hmayil here at ծառայիս քն (*tsarāyis k'o*), “to this servant of yours”, which contextually can also be completed with the more frequently used ծառայիս ւայ (abbreviation of աստուծոյ) (*tsarāyis astutsoy*), “to this servant of God”. In a review of six other very similar hmayils with this text, we found three variants of the concluding sentences of the passage, one with “of God” and two with “of yours”, but none which exactly matched the text of this hmayil. The closest variant reads “... through the intercession of these same ones, have mercy on all these who believe in you Christ, and in your Holy Cross. And be helper to this servant of yours (*name*). Amen.” Based on this variant, we chose “of yours” to complete the missing text here.



◦ St. Gregory of Narek, who appears to be chanting or praying.¹⁷¹

* Աղօթք զօրաւոր, սրբոյն Գրիգորի նարեկացւոյն: ԽԱ:¹⁷²

Որդի աստուծոյ կենդանւոյ, օրհնեալդ յամենայնի. Հօրդ ահաւորի անքնին ծնունդ, որ տկարանայ առ 'ի քէն և ոչ ինչ: Որ 'ի ծագել անըստեք նշուից ողորմութեան քոյ փառաց: Հալին մեղք, Հալածին դէք: Ջնջին յանցանք: Խզին կապանք: Խորտակին շղթայք: Կենդանաճնին մահացեալք: Բժշկին հարւածք: Ողջանան վերք: Բառնին ապականութիւնք Տեղի՛ տան տխրութիւնք: Նահանջին հեծութիւնք: Փախնու խաւարն: Մեկնի մեզն: Մերժի մառախուն: Փարատի մռայլն: Սպառի աղջամուղջն: Վերանայ մութն: Գնայ գիշերն: Տարագրի տագնապն: Չքանան չարիքն: Հալածին յուսահատութիւնք: Եւ թագաւոր՝ ձեռն քո: Ամենակալ՝ քաւիչդ ամենայնի, որ ոչ եկիր կորուսանել զմարդկան հոգիս, այլ կեցուցանել,¹⁷³ թո՛ղ ինձ զանթիւ չարիսն իմ բազում ողորմութեամբդ քո: Ձի դու միայն ես երկնի անճառ, և երկրի անդին՝ 'ի տարբ գոյից և յեղը ծագաց աշխարհի: Սկիզբն ամի և յամենայնի, ամենամբ, օրհնեալդ 'ի բարձունս: Լճքդ ընդ հօր և հօգոյդ սբջ փառք յաշխտեանս ամեն:

A powerful prayer, of Saint Gregory of Narek. 41.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ St. Gregory is holding his *Book of Lamentation* in his left hand, and a staff, possibly that of his status as *vardapet*, in his right.

¹⁷² St. Gregory of Narek (*Grigor Narekats'i* [Գրիգոր Նարեկացի], ca. 945–1003) is without a doubt the greatest mystical poetic writer of the Armenian Church. The creative language, profound imagery, and bottomless depth of Biblical allusions in his works are unmatched. St. Gregory wrote a commentary on the Song of Songs and a number of odes, litanies and encomia, but his greatest work is the *Book of Lamentation* (Մատեան Ողբերգութեան, *Matean Oghbergut'ean*), written near the end of his life. This work, also referred to as the *Book of Prayers*, and popularly known as the *Narek*, consists of 95 penitential prayers, all of which begin with “Speaking with God from the depths of the heart” (Ի խորոց սրտի խօսք ընդ Աստուծոյ, *I khorots' srti khōsk' ēnd Astutsoy*). In the words of his prayers—in his speaking with God—St. Gregory contrasts his hopeless, pitiful and sinful soul with the unperceivable, unapproachable and unfathomable majesty of God, and seeks to draw near to, comprehend and commune with Him, through the agency of his words. Not only is St. Gregory of Narek one of the preeminent saints in the Armenian Church, in 2015 he was declared a Doctor of the (Catholic) Church by Pope

Part 16

Son of the living God, blessed in all things, [whose] begetting by your awesome Father [is] unfathomable, for whom also nothing is impossible. At the rising shadowless brilliant flashes your glorious mercy, sins melt away, demons are expelled, transgressions are annulled, bonds are severed, chains are shattered, the dead are made alive, injuries are cured, wounds are healed, corruption is removed, sorrow gives way, sighs retreat, the dark flees, fog parts, haze recedes, gloom dissipates, darkness is consumed, the innermost dark is lifted away, the night departs, anguish is banished, calamity is annihilated, hopelessness is driven off. And your hand reigns. All-powerful One, expiatory of all, who came not to destroy the souls of mankind but to give life,¹⁷³ pardon my innumerable evil deeds in your abundant mercy. For you alone are ineffable in heaven, and inscrutable on earth, in the element of existence, and at the edge of the ends of the world.¹⁷⁴ The beginning of all, in all, with all fullness,¹⁷⁵ [you are] blessed in the highest. And to you, with the Father and your Holy Spirit, glory unto ages.¹⁷⁶ Amen.¹⁷⁷

Francis, one of only 36 saints to have ever been so named.

The text which follows is Prayer 41 of the *Book of Lamentation*, however without the opening “Speaking with God from the depths of the heart”. This prayer is included in the Rest Hour (Հանգստեան ժամ, *Hangstean zham*), the last of the daily offices in the Breviary or *Book of Hours* (Ժամագիրք, *Zhamagirk*) of the Armenian Church, which asks God for protection through the darkest hours of the night (Terian 2021: 188, n. 6).

¹⁷³ Cf. Luke 9:56 (Armenian version), զի Որդի մարդոյ ոչ եկն զոգիս մարդկան կորուսանել, այլ՝ կեցուցանել, “for the Son of man came not to destroy the souls of mankind, but to give life.” (“... is not come to destroy men’s lives, but...” in the KJV. The NRSV does not include this sentence.)

¹⁷⁴ աշխարհի (*ashkharhi*), nom. աշխարհ (*ashkharh*), “world”, is used in the Armenian Bible to translate the Greek κόσμος (*kósmos*), literally ‘order’ or ‘arrangement’. *Kosmos* is the entire elaborate *order* of reality, which includes the heavens as well the inhabited world of human beings. While the fifth-century Armenian translators of the Greek Bible would have understood the broad meaning of *ashkharh* as *kósmos*, it is unlikely that the eighteenth-century readers of this prayer would have had the same understanding. For more information on the word κόσμος, see Hart, *op. cit.*, pp. 460–461.

¹⁷⁵ The phrase “the beginning of all, in all, with all fullness”, with three instances of “all”, is very Trinitarian: God the Father is *the beginning of all* (սկիզբն ամենայնի); God the Son exists *in all things* (յամենայնի) created; and the God the Spirit brings about completion and perfection *with all fullness* (ամենայնիւ լրմամբ). (Thank you to Dr. Arlen for this insight.)

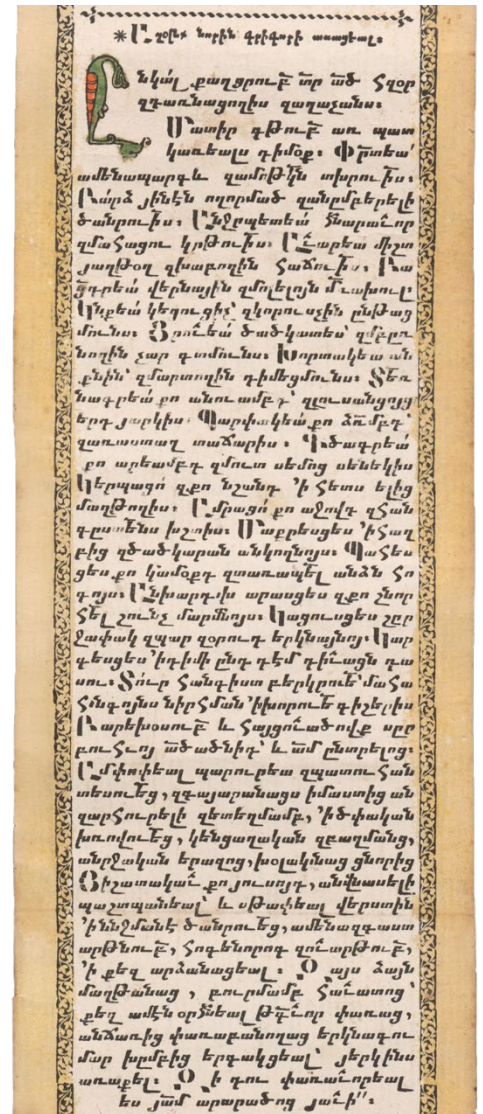
¹⁷⁶ See note 58 above.

¹⁷⁷ Other hmayils with the same prayer are followed by endings such as “let it be helper and guardian to this servant of God (*name*), amen”, or simply “let it be helper and guardian”. Perhaps the absence of such a phrase here was due to space limitations in the printed sections of the hmayil.

Part 17

* Աղօթք նորին Գրիգորի ասացեալ:¹⁷⁸

Ընկալ քաղցրութեամբ տէր աստուած հզօր զդառնացողիս զաղաչանս: Մատիւր գթութեամբ առ պատկառեալս դիմօք: Փարատեա՛ն ամենապարզև զամոթական տխրութիւնս: Բարձ յինէն ողորմած զանըմբերելի ծանրութիւնս: Անջրպետեա՛ն հնարաւոր զմահացու կրթութիւնս: Աւարեա՛ն¹⁷⁹ միշտ յաղթօղ զխաբողին հաճութիւնս:¹⁸⁰ Բացադրեա՛ն վերնային զմոլելոյն մառախուլ: Կնքեա՛ն կեցուցիչ՝ զկորուսչին ընթացմունս: Յրուեա՛ն ծածկատես՝ զմբռնողին չար գտմունս: Խորտակեա՛ն անքնին՝ զմարտողին դիմեցմունս: Տեսառնագրեա՛ն քո անուամբդ՝ զլուսանցոյց երդ յարկիս: Պարփակեա՛ն քո ձեռամբդ՝ զառաստաղ տաճարիս: Գծագրեա՛ն քո արեամբդ զմուտ սեմոց սենեկիս¹⁸¹ Կերպացո՛ղ զքո նշանդ՝ ՚ի հետս ելից մաղթողիս: Ամրացո՛ղ քո աջովդ զհանգըստեանս խշտիս: Մաքրեացես ՚ի հաղբից զծածկարան անկողնոյս: Պահեացես քո կամօքդ զտառապեալ անձն¹⁸² հոգոյս: Անխարդախ արասցես զքո շնորհեալ շունչ մարմնոյս: Կացուցես շրջափակ զպար զօրուդ երկնայնոյ: Կարգեացես ՚ի դիմի ընդ դեմ դիւացն դասու:¹⁸³ Տո՛ւր հանգիստ բերկրութեան՝ մահահանգոյնս նիրհման ՚ի խորութեան գիշերիս Բարեխօսութեամբ և հայցուածովք սրբուհւոյ աստուածածնիդ՝¹⁸⁴ և ամենայն ընտրելոց: Ամփոփեալ պարուրեա զպատուհան տեսութեանց, զգայարանացս իմաստից¹⁸⁵ անզարհուրելի զետեղմամբ, ՚ի ծփական խռովութեանց, կենցաղական ծբաղմանց, անբռնական երազոց, խօլականաց ցնորից Յիշատակաւ քո յուսոյդ, անվնասելի պաշտպանեալ՝ և սթափեալ վերստին ՚ի ննջմանէ ծանրութեանց, ամենազգաստ արթնութեա՛ն, հոգեւորոգ զուարթութեա՛ն, ՚ի բեզ արձանացեալ: Օ այս ձայն մաղթմանց, բուրմամբ հաւատոց՝ հաւատոց՝ բեզ ամէն օրնեալ թշուոր փառաց, անձառից փառաբանողաց երկնագու մար խրմբից երգակցեալ՝ յերկինս առաքել: Օ ի դու փառաւորեալ ես յամ արարածոց յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից:¹⁸⁶ ամեն:



Prayer said by the same Gregory.¹⁷⁸

Mighty Lord God, receive with sweetness my embittered entreaties.

¹⁷⁸ The latter half of Prayer 12 of St. Gregory of Narek's *Book of Lamentation*, which is also included in the Rest Hour of the *Book of Hours* of the Armenian Church (Terian 2021: 54, n. 5). See also note 172 above.

Draw near with compassion beside my face turned in shame. Giver of All, dispel my shameful sorrow. Merciful One, lift my unbearable heaviness from me. Capable One, cut off my deadly tendencies. Ever-Victorious One, destroy¹⁷⁹ the deceiver's pleasure in me.¹⁸⁰ Supernal One, dissipate the frenzied one's haze. Life-Giver, seal closed the destroyer's courses. Seer of Secrets, scatter the grasper's evil discoveries. Unfathomable One, crush the combatant one's tendencies. Make the sign of the Cross with your name [on] the translucent skylight of my dwelling. Enclose with your hand the roof of my temple. Mark with your blood the entrance doorpost of my chamber.¹⁸¹ Form your Sign on the exit path of this petitioner. Fortify with your right hand the bed frame of my repose. May you cleanse from defilement the cover of my bed. May you keep, through your will, the afflicted self¹⁸² of my soul. May you make unadulterated your breath graciously granted to my body. May you place [around me] a surrounding circle of your heavenly host. May you arrange [them] in front [of me] against the cohort of demons.¹⁸³ In the depths of this night, give delightful repose [and] death-like slumber through the intercession and petitions of the holy Bearer of God,¹⁸⁴ and all the chosen ones. Cover and enclose, with fearless disposition, the window of sights of my seat¹⁸⁵ of intellect, from agitated perturbations, transitory distractions, dream-like visions, [and] senseless delirium. By the recollection of your hope, [I am] protected unharmable, and awakened again from the heaviness of sleep, with sober alertness [and] soul-renewing cheerfulness,

¹⁷⁹ աւարեալ (*awareá*), “destroy”, literally “pillage” or “plunder”.

¹⁸⁰ The word հաճութիւնս (*hachut'iwns*), which contains the deictic suffix -u (-s), indicating a location at or near the speaker, is typically rendered in a possessive sense as “my pleasure”, or in a demonstrative sense as “this pleasure”. For clarity in this sentence, it is rendered as “(the) pleasure in me”, that is, the pleasure that the deceiver takes in leading St. Gregory away from God and toward sin.

¹⁸¹ “Make the sign of the Cross with your name [on] the translucent skylight of my roof. ... Mark with your blood the entrance doorpost of my chamber.” The typical Armenian house possessed only two entrances: the roof skylight (smoke hole) and the door. Both of these were significant in Armenian superstition as they were the only entrances through which demons could enter; great care was thus taken in protecting these entrances. (La Porta: 189.) Cf. also Exod. Chapter 12, in which the two doorposts and lintel of houses were marked with blood, so that God would pass over and not strike down the firstborn of those dwellings.

¹⁸² With regard to the word անձն (*andzn*), “self”, see note 52 above.

¹⁸³ The initial portion of this text—from “Mighty Lord God, receive with sweetness my embittered entreaties” to “May you arrange [them] in front [of me] against the cohort of demons”—here in paragraph form, consists of two poetic parts in verse, each comprised of ten lines. The first poetic part is further divided into two, the second half of which—from “Ever-Victorious One, destroy the deceiver's pleasure in me” to “Unfathomable One, crush the combatant one's tendencies”—seeks protection against the evil one. (Terian: *loc. cit.*)

¹⁸⁴ See note 65 above.

¹⁸⁵ զգայարանաց (*zgayaranats's*), nom. զգայարան (*zgayaran*), “sensorium”, is here rendered “seat”. The *sensorium*, Greek αἰσθητήριον (*aisthētērion*), is the internal organ or instrument of sensation or perception, analogous to the seat of the five senses, the outward sensory organs of the body.

Part 17

standing firm in you. Sending to heaven this voice of imploration, with the fragrance of faith, to you, all-blessed King of glory, singing together with the ineffable glorifying multitude of the heavenly assemblies. For you are glorified by all creation unto ages of ages.¹⁸⁶ Amen.

¹⁸⁶ See note 58 above.



- St. George on horseback, holding a lance, with the Hand of God pointing to him.

* Մաղթանք սրբոյն գեորգայ զօրաւարին:¹⁸⁷

ԲԱՐԵԽՕՍՈՒԹեամբ սրբոյն գեորգայ զօրավարին. և անդրէի զինաւորին:¹⁸⁸ և չորից զինուորացն՝ բասուսի և սեբի և տիգի¹⁸⁹ և բասիլիդեա: *Մինասայ երմոզինեա և գրաբոսի: և սրբոց ատովմեանց: սրբոց ոսկեանց. և սուզիասանց:¹⁹⁰ և խարիտեանցն:¹⁹¹ և այլ ամ սբց բարեխօսութեամբն պահեա՛ զծառայս քո (name)

Prayer of Saint George the Warrior.¹⁸⁷

Through the intercession of Saint George the Warrior, and Andrew the Stratelates;¹⁸⁸ and of the four soldiers, Bassus and Eusebius and Eutyches¹⁸⁹ and Basilides; of Menas, Hermogenes and Euegraphius;

¹⁸⁷ See Feydit: 168–173 (Text LQ–XXXVI, Var. Ժ–J), and the notes there. The rendering “Prayer of Saint George...” is based on the use of genitive forms of “Saint”, “George” and “the Warrior”. Since this is a prayer to God *through* the intercession of those named, “of Saint George” should not be understood in the descriptive or possessive sense of “Saint George’s Prayer”, but rather as “Prayer related to Saint George”.

In many traditions throughout the world, the mounted warrior St. George is known as a slayer of dragons, and he is often depicted in this role in medieval Armenian art, such as manuscript illuminations and relief sculptures at churches and monasteries:

Among the military saints Theodore and George were predominantly associated with the miracle of dragon-slaying and often appear together. ... Prior to the eleventh century Saint George is almost invariably depicted in combat with a man. Then during the eleventh century the iconography alters and the saint is increasingly represented slaying a dragon.

The earliest dated and visually identifiable representation of Saint George, killing a man and not yet a dragon, seems to be a relief depiction on the façade of the Armenian palace church dedicated to the Holy Cross which stands on the small island of Aght’amar situated southeast of Lake Van (now in eastern Turkey), erected by King Gagik Artsruni, ruler of the southern Armenia kingdom of Vaspurakan between the years 915 to 921... (Kuehn: 76.)

¹⁸⁸ զինաւորին (zinaworin), nom. զինաւոր (zinawor), “soldier”, here referring to a specific Roman military officer who was martyred, is rendered as his title “Stratelates” (στρατηλάτης, *master of the soldiers*).

¹⁸⁹ Reading և սեբի և տիգի (ew sebi ew tigi) as և Լսեբի և Լտիգի (ew ewsebi ew ewtigi), with the last word corrected to ևտիգի (ewtik’i), “and (of) Eusebius and Eutyches”. Not only were names often not capitalized in manuscripts and printed texts, the ligature և (which has no upper-case form) was also used in names (for example, Լաւ = Էւա = ‘Eve’). Here, one can easily see how a scribe or printer, seeing և Լսեբի և Լտիգի in a text, would conclude that the և- at the beginning of each name, immediately after և ‘and’, was a dittographic error, and not being familiar with the Greek names, would incorrectly write or typeset it as և սեբի և տիգի.

Part 18

and of the Atomian Saints; of the Oskian Saints, and the Sukiasans;¹⁹⁰ and of the Kharitians;¹⁹¹ and through the intercession of all the other saints, protect this servant of yours (*name*).

¹⁹⁰ Reading սուգիասանց (*sugiasants'*) as սուքիասանց (*suk'iasants'*).

¹⁹¹ Reading խարիտեանցն (*khariteants'n*) as խարիթեանցն (*kharit'eants'n*).

Part 19

◦ St. Sargis on horseback, looking up at an angel, with his son Martiros.

* Երգ առ սուրբ զօրավարն սարգիս:¹⁹²

ԵՐՋԱՆԻԿԸՆԻՆՑ¹⁹³ սուրբԸՆԻՆՑ սարգիս. մեծ զօրական հայոց ազգիս. 'ի ժամ փորձման առ մեզ հասցիս. քաջ¹⁹⁴ սպառազեն սուրբըդ սարգիս:¹⁹⁵

* Սիրով արքայս զձեզ ընկալեալ:
և մեծագոյն փառօք պատուեալ:
մեծ զօրավիգ մեզ առաքեալ:
քաջ մարտընչող սուրբըդ սարգիս:

* Ծունըր կըրկնեմք սըրբոյ նշանիդ:
և նըկարեալ քո պատկերիդ:
մեզ հասանիլ 'ի յօգնութիւն:
ատենահաս սուրբըդ սարգիս:

* Իսկ գերելոց յայլասեռից:¹⁹⁶
որք 'ի կապանսն են յերկաթից:
հան ըզնոսա 'ի չար կապից:
մեծ գերեհան սուրբըդ սարգիս:

* Հօրն փառք՝ Որդւոյն պատիւ՝ և սուրբ Հոգոյն յաւիտեանս¹⁹⁷ ամեն:

Օգնական և պահապան լեր սուրբդ սարգիս ծարայիս աստուծոյ (name) ամեն:



Song to Saint Sargis the General.¹⁹²

O happy¹⁹³ Saint Sargis, great soldier of this Armenian nation, may you come to us in the hour of trial, well [and] fully armed,¹⁹⁴ O Saint Sargis.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² See Feydit: 198–205 (Text ԾԱ–ԼԻ), and Appendix D for a transcription and translation of this fifteen-stanza version of this song, with the corresponding stanzas of the hmayil side-by-side for comparison.

St. Sargis or Sergius († ca. 362 A.D.), one of the most beloved Armenian saints, was a Roman military leader from Cappadocia who was martyred in Sassanid Persia with his son Martiros. As a warrior saint, he is known as a defender against evil, and is depicted in this role in medieval Armenian art:

In addition to Saint George [at the Aght'amar Church of the Holy Cross], two further mounted warrior saints, Theodore and Sergius [Sargis], are portrayed. ... The Armenian martyr Saint Sergius, traditionally considered the defender *par excellence* against all kinds of evil and dangers, was here added to the commonly paired military saints Theodore and George... (Kuehn: 76–77.)

¹⁹³ Երջանիկ (*erjanik*), “happy”, can also be rendered “prosperous” or “blessed”.

¹⁹⁴ For քաջ (*k'ach'*), read քաջ (*k'aj*), rendered “well” here, and “bravely” in the next stanza.

¹⁹⁵ Although the first stanza of the song is in paragraph form, it is consistent with the next three poetic stanzas, having four lines of eight syllables per line, end rhyme in the first three lines, and the same final two words in the fourth line.

Part 19

With love the king received you,
And honored [you] with greatest glory,
Great military support sent to us,
Bravely fighting, O Saint Sargis.

We bend [our] knee to your holy sign,
And to your painted icon.
To come to us in aid,
Timely arriving, O Saint Sargis.

But those taken captive by infidels,¹⁹⁶
Who are in the fetters of iron,
Remove them from [their] evil bindings,
Great emancipator, O Saint Sargis.

Glory to the father [and] honor to the Son and the Holy Spirit unto
ages.¹⁹⁷ Amen.

Be helper and guardian, O Saint Sargis, of this servant of God
(*name*). Amen.

¹⁹⁶ յայլասեռից (*yaylaserits'*), nom. ալլասեռ (*aylaser'*), "foreigner" (lit. 'other kind, species'). Its definition in the *NBHL* includes 'foreign heathen', here rendered "infidel".

¹⁹⁷ See note 58 above.

- The Evangelist Matthew writing his Gospel, with a man (with wings, as an angel), the animal with which he is symbolically associated.

* Սուրբ Աւետարանս Մատթէոսի:¹⁹⁸

* Տէրն մեր Յիսուս Բրիստոս:

ԵՒ ԵԼԵԱԼ ԱՆՏԻ յիսուս գնաց 'ի կողմանս տիրոսի և սիդովնի: * Եւ ահա՛ կին մի քանանացի 'ի սահմանաց անտի նոցա, ելեալ աղաղակէր և ասէր. ողորմեաց ինձ տէր՝ որդի դաւթի. դուստր իմ չարաչար այսահարի: * Եւ նա ոչ ետ նմա պատասխանի:¹⁹⁹ * Եւ մատուցեալ աշակերտքն նորա աղաչէին զնա և ասէին՝ արձակեա՛ զնա զի աղաղակէ՛ր զհետ մեր: * Նա՛ պատասխանի ետ և ասէ. ոչ ուրեք առաքեցայ եթէ ոչ առ ոչխարս կորուսեալս տանն խրայելի: * Եւ նա՛ մատուցեալ երկիր պագանէր²⁰⁰ նմա և ասէր. տէր՝ օգնեա՛ ինձ: * Պատասխանի ետ նմա և ասէ. ոչ է քարուոք առնուլ զհաց մանկանց և արկանել շանց: * Եւ նա ասէ՛ այո՛ տէր՝ քանզի և շոնք կերակրին 'ի փշրանաց անկելոց 'ի սեղանոյ տն իւրեանց: * Յայնժամ պատասխանի ետ նմա յիսուս և ասէ. ով կին դու՛ մեծ են հաւատք քո. եղիցի²⁰² քեզ որպէս և կամիս: * Եւ բժշկեցաւ դուստրն նորա 'ի նմին ժամու: Պահապան եղիցի ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name)²⁰³ ամեն:



The Holy Gospel of Matthew.¹⁹⁸

Our Lord Jesus Christ.

And leaving there Jesus went to the districts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold! a Canaanite woman from those regions, came out [and] cried and said, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David. My daughter is grievously demon possessed.” And he did not answer her.¹⁹⁹ And the disciples approached him, beseeched him and said, “Dismiss her, for she cries out after us.” He answered and said, “Nowhere was I sent forth, if not to the lost sheep of Israel.” And

¹⁹⁸ Matt. 15:21–28.

¹⁹⁹ նա ոչ ետ նմա պատասխանի, (*na óch’ et nma pataskhani*) “he did not answer her”, literally “he did not give to her an answer”. The transitive verb տաւ (*tam*), ‘give’ (here in its aorist indicative form *et*, ‘he/she gave’), together with the direct-object noun that receives its action, is sometimes rendered as a denominal verb of that noun. As there was no verb “to answer” in fifth-century Classical Armenian, the phrase *tam pataskhani*, “give an answer”, was regularly used. Here and elsewhere in the hmayil, conjugations of *tam pataskhani* are rendered as the verb “answer”.

Part 20

she approached [and] bowed down²⁰⁰ to him, and said, “Lord, help me.” He answered her and said, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw [it] to dogs.” And she said, “Yes, Lord, though dogs also are fed by crumbs falling from their lord’s table.”²⁰¹ Then Jesus answered her and said, “Oh! you woman, great is your faith. It shall be²⁰² for you just as you wish.” And her daughter was healed at that same hour. Let it be guardian of this servant of God (*name*).²⁰³ Amen.

²⁰⁰ See note 42 above.

²⁰¹ 'ի սեղանոյ տէառն իւրեանց (*i seghanoy tearn iwreants'*), “from their lord’s table”, corresponds here to the Greek ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῶν κυρίων αὐτῶν (*apo tēs trapézēs tōn kyríōn autōn*). Both the *KJV* and *NRSV* render this phrase as “from their masters’ table”, which obscures the word-association, in both Armenian and Greek, between the lord (տէառն [*tearñ*], κυρίων [*kyríōn*]), from whose table dogs are fed crumbs, and the Lord (տէր [*tēr*], κύριε [*kýrie*]) to whom the woman is speaking, whose crumbs, even to Canaanites, are of the Bread of Life.

²⁰² Եղիցի (*eghits'i*), “it shall be”, can also be rendered “let it be”.

²⁰³ Պահապան եղիցի ծառայիս աստուծոյ (*name*) (*Pahapan eghits'i tsar'ayis astutsoy (name)*), “Let it be guardian of this servant of God (*name*).” With this formulaic addendum to the passage, the protective power of the Gospel (the 3rd person singular ‘it’ in *eghits'i*, “let it be”), is made to specifically apply to the named beneficiary of this passage (here unnamed). The 3rd person singular of *pahapan eghits'i* can also be read as “let him [Christ] be guardian”.

Part 21

- The Evangelist Mark writing his Gospel, with a (winged) lion, the animal with which he is symbolically associated.

* Սուրբ Աւետարանս Մարկոսի:²⁰⁴ * Տէրն
մեր Յիսուս Քրիստոս:²⁰⁵

ԵՒ ԸՆԴ ԱՅԳՆ ընդ առաւօտն յարուցեալ ել. և գնաց յանապատ տեղի և անդ կայր յաղօթս: * Եւ գնաց զհետ նորա սիմօն՝ և որք ընդ նմայն էին: * Եւ իբրև գտին զնա. ասենցնա թէ ամենքին խնդրեն զքեզ: * Եւ ասէ ցնասա. եկայք, երթիցուք և յայլ մօտաւոր գիւղաքաղաքսն՝ զի և անդ քարոզեցից. զի յայս իսկ եկեալ եմ: * Եւ քարոզէր ՚ի ժողովուրդս²⁰⁶ նոցա ընդ ամենայն գալիլեացիս. և դևս հանէր: Գայ առ նա բորոտ մի. աղաչէր, ՚ի ծունր իջանէր²⁰⁷ և ասէր. տէր՝ եթէ կամիս կարօղ ես զիս սրբել: * Իսկ յիսուս գթացեալ ձգեաց զձեռն. մերձեցաւ ՚ի նա՝ և ասէ ցնա. կամի՞մ,²⁰⁸ սրբեաց: * Եւ իբրև ասացն ցնա՝ վաղվաղակի գնաց ՚ի նմանէ բորոտութիւնն՝ և սրբեցաւ: * Օգնական եղիցի ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name) ամեն:²⁰⁹



The Holy Gospel of Mark.²⁰⁴ Our Lord Jesus Christ.²⁰⁵

And at dawn with the morning rising, he went out, and walked to a deserted place, and there he stood in prayer. And Simon, and those who were with him, walked after him. And when they found him, they said to him, “Everyone seeks you.” And he said to them, “Come, let us also set out to the other nearby towns, so that I may also preach there, for indeed I have come for this very [thing].” And he preached in their synagogues²⁰⁶ throughout all Galilee, and was casting out demons. A leper came to him, beseeched [him], kneeled²⁰⁷ and said, “O Lord, if you are willing, you are able to cleanse me.” So Jesus took pity, extended [his] hand, drew [it] near

²⁰⁴ Mark 1:35–42.

²⁰⁵ The line ends with Տէրն, here an abbreviation of one of the typical opening lines of a Gospel reading in the Armenian Church, Տէրն մեր Յիսուս Քրիստոս (*Tēr mer Yisus K’ristos*), “Our Lord Jesus Christ”, as in the previous Gospel text of Matthew.

²⁰⁶ ժողովուրդս (*zhoghovurds*), nom ժողովուրդ (*zhoghovurd*), is used in the Armenian Bible to translate the Greek συναγωγή (*synagogē*), “gathering (of people)”, which word was used at the time for Jewish places of worship. *Zhoghovurd* is also used often in the Armenian Bible to translate the Greek λαός (*laós*), “people”, and is sometimes rendered “assembly” or “congregation”.

²⁰⁷ ՚ի ծունր իջանէր (*i tsunr ijanēr*), “(he) kneeled”, literally “(he) descended to knee”.

Part 21

to him, and said to him, “I am willing.²⁰⁸ Be cleansed.” And when he said that to him, the leprosy immediately left him and he was cleansed. Let it be helper of this servant of God (*name*). Amen.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ Reading կամիմ without a question mark as կամիմ, “I am willing”, as in the Biblical text.

²⁰⁹ Although no abbreviation marks are present after Օգնական եղիցի (*Ōgnakan eghits’i*), it is presumed that the line ends with the same formulaic request as in the next two Gospel passages, Օգնական եղիցի ծառայիս աստուծոյ (*name*) ամեն (*Ōgnakan eghits’i tsarāyis astutsoy (name) amēn*) “Let it be helper of this servant of God (*name*). Amen.” With this addendum, the succoring power of the Gospel (the 3rd person singular ‘it’ in *eghits’i*, “let it be”), is made to specifically apply to the named beneficiary of this passage (here unnamed). Similar the passage from Matthew, the 3rd person singular of *ōgnakan eghits’i* can also be read as “let him [Christ] be helper”.

- The Evangelist Luke writing his Gospel, with a calf, the animal with which he is symbolically associated.



* Սուրբ Աւետարանս Ղուկասու:²¹⁰

* Տէրն մեր Յիսուս Թրիստոս:

ԵՒ ԷՉ 'Ի ԿԱՓԱՌՆԱՌԱՄ 'ի քաղաքն գալիլեացոց՝ և ուսուցանէր զնսա 'ի շաբաթսն: * Եւ զարմանային ընդ վարդապետութիւն նորա՝ զի իշխանութեամբ էր բան նորա: * Եւ էր 'ի ժողովրդեան²¹¹ այր մի. զոր ունէր այս դիւի պղծոյ. և աղաղակեալ 'ի ձայն մեծ: * Ասէ թուլացո՛ւ. զի²¹² կայ՝ մեր և քո՝ յիսուս նազորեցի. եկիր կորուսանել²¹³ զմեզ. զիտեմք զքեզ՝ ով ես սբդ. այլ: * Սաստեաց 'ի նա յիսուս և ասէ՝ պապանձեաց և ել 'ի դմանէ. զգետնեաց զնա դնն 'ի միջի անդ. և ել 'ի նմանէ. և ինչ ոչ վնասեաց նմա: * Եւ եղեն զարմանալիք 'ի վերայ ամենեցուն խօսեին ընդ միմեանս և ասէին զի՛նչ է բանս այս զի իշխանութեամբ և զօրութեամբ սաստե այսոց պղծոց՝ և ելանն: * Եւ երթայր հռչակ զնմանէ ընդ ամ տեղիս շուրջ զգաւառան: Օգնական եղիցի ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name) ամեն:²¹⁴

The Holy Gospel of Luke.²¹⁰

Our Lord Jesus Christ.

And he came down to Capernaum to the city of the Galileans, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were astonished with his teaching, for his word was with authority. And there was a man in the synagogue,²¹¹ who had the evil spirit of a filthy demon; and he cried out with a great voice. He said, "Let [us] be! What have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth?²¹² You came to destroy us?²¹³ We know who you are, that holy [one] of God." Jesus rebuked him and said, "Be silent and depart from him." The demon threw him to the ground there in the midst [of them], and departed from him, and did not harm him at all. And amazement came over everyone, [and] they were speaking with each other and saying, "What is this word?"

²¹⁰ Luke 4:31–37.

²¹¹ See note 206 above.

²¹² Reading զի with a question mark as զի՛, as in the Biblical text.

²¹³ Reading կորուսանել with a question mark as կորուսանել՞, "to destroy?", as in the Biblical text.

Part 22

For with authority and power he rebukes the filthy evil spirits, and they depart.” And the report of him went about throughout all the places around that region. Let it be helper of this servant of God (*name*). Amen.²¹⁴

²¹⁴ See note 209 above.

Part 23

- The Evangelist John writing his Gospel, with an eagle, the animal with which he is symbolically associated.²¹⁵

* Սուրբ Աւետարանս Յօհաննու:²¹⁶

* Տէրն մեր Յիսուս Զրիստոս:

ԵՒ ՅԵՏ ԱՅՍՈՐԻԿ տօն էր հրէից՝ և էլ յիսուս յերուսաղէմ: Եւ էր յերուսաղէմ ՚ի պրոբատիկէ աւազանին. որ կոչիր երրայեցերէն բերեղդայ²¹⁷ հինգ սրահ: * Յորս անկեալ դնիր²¹⁸ բազմութիւն յոյժ հիւանդաց, կուրաց, կաղաց, գօսացելոց. որք ակն ունէին²¹⁹ ջրոցն յուզելոյ: * Եւ հրեշտակ տեսաւ իջանէր ըստ ժամանակի յաւազանն՝ և յուզեր զջուրն. և որ նախ ՚ի շարժումն ջուրցն իջանէր յաւազանն՝²²⁰ բժշկիր. ոչ ունելով զնշան հիւանդութեան: * Եւ անդ էր այր մի, որոյ երեսուն և ութ ամ էր ՚ի հիւանդութեան իւրում:²²¹ * Չնա իբրեւ ետես յիսուս, զի անկեալ դնիր. և գիտաց եթէ բազում ժամանակք են այնուհետեւ. ասէ ցնա՝ կամիս²²² ողջ լինիլ: * Պատասխանի ետ նմա հիւանդն. տէր՝ ոչ զոք ունիմ թէ յորժամ ջուրքն յուզիցին, արկցէ յաւազանն. և մինչ ես դանդաղիմ, այլ ոք քան զիս յառաջագոյն իջանէ: * Ասէ ցնա յիսուս՝ արի՛, առ զմահիճս քո և գնա: * Եւ ողջացաւ այրն՝ և յարեալ՝ Էառ զմահիճս իւր և շրջեր. և էր շաբաթ յաւուրն յայնմիկ: Օգնական եղիցի ծառայիս աստուծոյ (name) ամէն:²²³



The Holy Gospel of John.²¹⁶

Our Lord Jesus Christ.

And after this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And he was in Jerusalem at the Probatic pool, which was called Bethesda in Hebrew,²¹⁷ [that had] five portico[s]. In which were laid²¹⁸ a great multitude of infirm, blind, lame, [and] withered

²¹⁵ As he writes his Gospel, St. John is looking up to heaven, where he sees the Virgin Mary holding the infant Christ. At the bottom of the illustration, next to his foot, are the letters ԳՐ (GR) for Grigor Marzuanets'i, the artist who carved the woodcut.

²¹⁶ John 5:1–9.

²¹⁷ The Probatic pool, also known as the Bethesda pool, was a pool or basin where the sacrificial sheep were purified.

²¹⁸ անկեալ դնիր (ankeal dniwr), “were laid”, literally “was placed fallen down”. The Biblical text reads անկեալ դնէր (ankeal dnēr); the use of dniwr here reflects a Post Classical grammatical change to distinguish -իմ

Part 23

[people], who waited²¹⁹ for the stirring of the water. And an angel of the Lord would come down at certain times into the pool, and stirred the water. And whoever came down into pool²²⁰ first at the stirring of the water was healed, having no sign of infirmity. And there was a man there, who had an infirmity²²¹ [for] thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him, that he was laid fallen, and knew that it was a long time since [he had been there], he said to him, “Do you want to be well?”²²² The infirm [man] answered him, “O Lord, I have no one who, when the waters are stirred, will put [me] in the pool, and while I am moving slowly, others go down [into the pool] before me.” Jesus said to him, “Rise, take your bed and walk.” And the man was made well, and rose, took his bed and moved about. And it was the Sabbath on that same day. Let it be helper of this servant of God (*name*). Amen.²²³

verbs from -նմ verbs in the third person singular of the imperfect indicative tense.

²¹⁹ ակն ունէին (*akn unēin*), “(they) waited”, literally “(they) had the eye”, that is, were looking for something to occur.

²²⁰ յաւազանն (*yawazann*), “in the pool”, is not present in the Biblical text, however the Zohrabeian Bible notes that յաւազանն is present in some manuscripts that were consulted to produce that edition.

²²¹ Էր ՚ի հիւանդութեան իւրում (*ēr i hiwandut'ean iwrum*), “(he) had an infirmity”, literally “(he) was in his infirmity/sickness”.

²²² Reading կամիս with a question mark as կամի՞ս, as in the Biblical text.

²²³ See note 209 above.

Part 24

◦ Sword-bearing saint confronting the demon *al*.²²⁴

* Աղօթք վասն կապանաց դիւաց:²²⁵

ՍՈՂՈՄՈՆ ԻՄԱՍտունն²²⁶ ետես զիշխանն դիւաց խաւարի. որ գոռայր իբրեւ զամպ և ճէր որպէս զվիշապ:²²⁷ * Ասէ սողոմոն՝ ո՛վ պիգծ և անիծեալ՝ զի՛նչ ես դու. ասէ դեն՝ ես եմ իշխանն դիւաց՝ և մայր ամենայն չարեաց. ես եմ որ ածեմ ատելութիւն ՚ի մէջ եղբարց. ածեմ վեճ՝ կռիւ՝ և խռովութիւն. ես եմ որ մտանեմ ՚ի սիրտ մարդկան և բերեալ սերմանեմ զչար ցանկութիւն՝ ուստի ծնանի՛ պոռնկութիւնն:

* Ասէ սողոմոն՝ բարձրացիր որ ես տեսանեմ. և բարձրացաւ քան զլեառն, և կամեր անկանիլ ՚ի վերայ նորա:

* Ասէ սողոմոն՝ փոքրացիր. և փոքրացաւ քան զհատն մանանխոյ. և սողոմոն կալաւ զնա և եդ ՚ի յաջ մատանին. և մաս մի ՚ի տախտակացն սինեայի եդ ՚ի վերայ ակամբ մատանոյն:²²⁸

* Եւ արդ՝ նոյի տապանաւն. և յակոր նահապետի սանդիստաւն. և մովսէսի տապանակաւն. և ահարօնի զաւազանաւն. և կոնոնոսի աղօթիւքն.²²⁹ հալածեալ և խափանեալ եղիցին ամենայն չար դեքն և սատանայական չար հնարքն ՚ի ծառայես աստուծոյ (name) ամեն:



Prayer for binding demons.²²⁵

Solomon the Wise²²⁶ saw the prince of the demons of darkness,

²²⁴ The demon in the illustration accompanying this part is an *al* (ալ) or *alk'* (ալք'), which enters into the wombs of pregnant women to kill them and/or their unborn children. Illustrations of *alk'* often depict them holding the innards of their victim. Although the *al* appears in the illustration here, it only appears by name in Part 26 below. For more on these demons, see Part 26 and note 236. For portions of other hmayils with illustrations of *alk'*, see Appendix C, Figs. 8, 9 and 28.

²²⁵ See Feydit: 324–327 (Text ԺԻԲ–CXXII).

²²⁶ Legends of Solomon the Wise and his demon-exorcising ability go back to antiquity. Flavius Josephus, the 1st century A.D. Roman-Jewish historian and military leader, states that Solomon was able to expel demons, and that he personally witnessed exorcisms that were performed using Solomon's method and incantations:

Now so great was the prudence and wisdom which God granted Solomon that he surpassed the ancients, and even the Egyptians... And God granted him knowledge of the art used against demons for the benefit and healing of men. He also composed incantations by which illnesses are relieved, and left behind forms of exorcisms with which those possessed by demons drive them out, never to return. And this kind of cure is of very great power among us to this day, for I have seen a certain Eleazar, a countryman of mine, in the presence of Vespasian, his sons, tribunes and a number of other soldiers, free men possessed by demons, and this was the manner of the cure: he put to the nose of the possessed man a ring which had under its seal one of the roots prescribed by Solomon, and then, as the man smelled it, drew out the demon through his nostrils, and, when the man at once fell down, adjured the demon never to come back into him, speaking

who roared like a [storm] cloud and shrieked like a *vishap*.²²⁷ Solomon said, “Oh foul and cursed [one], what are you?” The demon said, “I am the prince of demons and the mother of all evils. I am [the one] who brings enmity among brothers. I bring discord, quarrel, and disorder. I am [the one] who enters into the heart of mankind, and bringing [these] I sow the seeds of evil desire, from which fornication is born.”

Solomon said, “Arise that I see [you].” And it rose [higher] than a mountain, and intended to fall upon him.

Solomon said, “Become small.” And it became smaller than a grain of mustard. And Solomon took it and placed [it] on [his] right-hand ring. And he placed a piece of the tablets of Sinai on top of the gemstone of his ring.²²⁸

Solomon’s name and reciting the incantations which he had composed... (Josephus: 8.2.5.)

²²⁷ The *vishap* (վիշապ) is a dragon in Armenian mythology and folklore, often associated with storms, whirlwinds or storm clouds. Manuk Abeghyan states:

Storm snakes play a large role in Armenian folk beliefs. They are called *vishaps* (“dragons”), an old and frequently used word. It is a Persian loanword which is popularly pronounced as *ushap*. Sometimes actual snakes if they are very large, are also called dragons. This, however, is merely a transferal from the storm snake to the real one. Many legends concern themselves with the battles waged by mountain snakes against each other which have led to traditions of snakes in the air fighting over their king’s crown thereby causing a change in the weather.

In all stories told about the *vishap* it appears as the personification of a storm, whirlwind, or storm cloud. Its physical nature is quite clear, even if it is somewhat obscured in certain folk tales. From ancient times to the present the dragon represents a whirlwind or storm cloud. Anania Shirakats’i wrote about the meaning of *vishap hanel* (“to remove / pull out a dragon”):

“The whirlwind is a wind that goes upward. Wherever there are abysses or crevasses in the earth, the wind has entered the veins of the earth and then having found an opening, rushes up together in a condensed cloud with a great tumult, uprooting the pine trees, snatching away rocks and lifting them up noisily to drop them down again. This is what they call pulling up the dragon.”

Vanakan Vardapet wrote:

“They assert that the *vishap* is being pulled up. The winds blow from different directions and meet each other. This is a whirlwind (*p’ot’orik*). If they do not overcome each other, they whirl round each other and go upward. The fools who see this, imagine it to be the dragon or something else.”

Just as the Greek mythological figure Typhoeus represents a whirlwind, water spout, or generally a storm and is also a dragon-like being whose fiery breath and thick clouds fill the sky, so too the Armenian *vishap* is a monstrous mythological being which is simultaneously a whirlwind or storm. As a storm figure, it ascends or is drawn up to the sky and dwells in the lofty mountains where whirlwinds intersect, just as among other peoples the storm dragon is associated with chasms and caves. As a being of storms or a being made of clouds, the dragon also frequently changes its form. For example, according to Eznik it appears sometimes as a snake, sometimes as a man, sometimes as a mule or camel, or as a hunter pursuing game on a swift steed.

Grain which has been harvested may also be stolen from barns by the *vishap*, and then carried off on pack animals. The same story about removing a *vishap* is told by many other peoples about a storm cloud or a troll which personifies a whirlwind. In the Middle Ages it was said about the *vishaps* that they sucked the milk from cows. The same was said about the Russian Ljeshi, who were both forest trolls, fiery dragons and other beings as well as personifications of a whirlwind. Among the Armenians as other folk, a damaging breath is attributed to the storm dragon. Thus in a murky passage in Eznik we read:

“Moreover, if the *vishap* should be raised up, it is not by those called oxen, but rather by some hidden power, at God’s command, so that its breath not harm men or animals.” (Abeghyan: 78–80.)

²²⁸ Not unlike a *djinn* bound by a magic ring, Solomon binds the spirit by placing it on his ring and using a piece

And now, by the Ark of Noah, and the Ladder of Patriarch Jacob, and the Ark of Moses, and the Rod of Aaron, and the Prayer of Kononos,²²⁹ all the evil demons and satanic evil devices shall be expelled and impeded from this servant of God (*name*). Amen.

of the tablets of the Ten Commandments, in the manner of a written magic charm, to contain the spirit. The Ring or Seal of Solomon, in many traditions dating back to antiquity, is a signet ring used by Solomon to control or bind demons. In some narratives, the ring was engraved by God and given to Solomon by the archangel Michael, and had one part of the ring made of brass, used to seal written commands to good spirits, and another part made of iron, used to seal commands to evil spirits.

In the *Testament of Solomon*, a magico-mystical narrative with early forms that date back to the third century A.D., Solomon uses the ring to control demons and conscript them to construct the Temple of Jerusalem, which according to legend was built without the use of tools (Toporkov: 69–78; cf. 1 Kings (3 Kings LXX) 6:7, “The house was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron was heard in the temple while it was being built” (NRSV).) According to Prof. James R. Russell, “It should come as no surprise that Solomon figures prominently in Armenian magical spells, which invoke Solomon’s seal (*knik’*), ring (*matani*), throne (*at’or*), and temple (*tachar*). Some charms invoke the hair of the mane and the shoe of the hoof (*dziyoy dzar, nal*) of his mount, as though he were a mounted warrior saint like George, Sergius [Sargis], and Theodore, who ride down and lance dragons and demons.” (Russell 2021: 113.)

²²⁹ Armenian prayers (incantations) of protection against demons often list a number of holy objects that are used in a magical way to expel or bind demons. (In some incantations, the demon swears an oath on these items, promising to stay away.) In addition to those included here, one may find the Milk of the Holy Virgin, the Harp of David, the Tablets of Moses, and the Nails of Christ, to name a few (Harutyunyan: 117, 131). Here, the hmayil includes “by the Prayer of Kononos” (կոնոնոսի աղօթիւքն, *kononosi aghōt’iwk’n*) as a means to entrap or control demons, in a manner similar to the Ring of Solomon.

The late Professor Sargis Harutyunyan (1928–2018), who was a member of the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences in Armenia, discusses St. Kononos as follows:

Kononos the Expeller of Evil Spirits (Conon of Isauria)... destroys the pagan shrines with the power of his word and makes the demons inhabiting them obey and serve him. ... In Armenia, the monastery of St. Kononos was located in Sasun (Hazzo), where, according to legend, there is a large army of demons, “filled into *karask’* [large clay jars] and buried under the ground, sealed closed until the day of judgment.”

The activities of St. Kononos in expelling the demons, subjugating them, and locking them in *karask’*, are almost identical to the similar actions of Solomon the Wise, for which he received the epithet of Expeller of Evil Spirits – Expeller of Demons. (Harutyunyan: 347.)

The monastery dedicated to St. Kononos, near the village of Norashēn in Sasun (now part of Batman province in southeastern Turkey), was visited by the late-nineteenth-century ethnographer Manuel Mirakhorian, and described in his *Descriptions of Travels in the Armenian-Populated Regions of Eastern Tajikstan*. Included in his description is the following:

On the wall of the church located on the left side of the monastery gates is the tomb of Saint Kononos. It is a plain tomb, visited by Armenian, as well as Kurdish pilgrims. The Kurds call it the tomb of “Sheikh Eomer”, and they are granted a special area in the monastery to pray. There is also an area where the insane are brought, and are restrained using special iron chains. After remaining enchained for a few days, they are thought to have taken “his *murat*” [նւրաւս < Turkish *murad* < Arabic *murrād*, ‘desire, longing’], and are released.

In the southern corner of the church is a mound of dirt, rising to a height of about a meter, and large enough for a man to sit. It is said that “the chief of devils” was buried there, “condemned to chains and imprisoned by Saint Kononos.” (Mirakhorian: 74.)

Interestingly, Manuk Abeghyan states that the *alk’* “have a king who lives chained and constantly shrieking in the abyss, buried up to the neck in lead” (Abeghyan: 118), not unlike the chief of devils buried in chains at St. Kononos monastery.

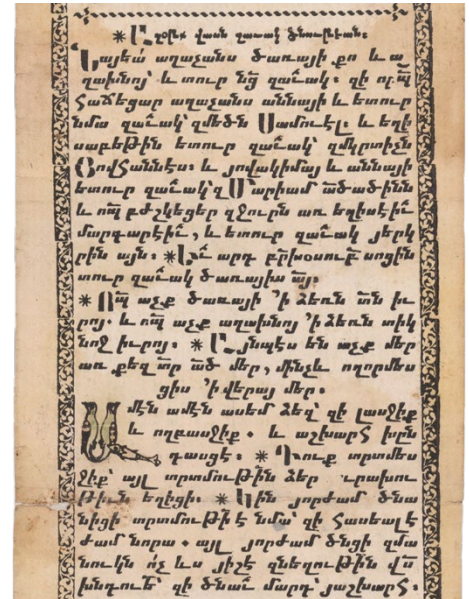
Part 25

* Աղօթք վասն զաւակ ծնութեան:²³⁰

Նայեա՛ աղաչանս ծառայի քո և աղախնոյ՝ և տուր նոցա զաւակ: զի որպէս հաճեցար աղաչանս աննայի և ետուր նմա զաւակ՝ զմեծն Սամուէլ: և եղիսաբերթին ետուր զաւակ՝ զմկրտիչն Յովհաննէս: և յովակիմայ և աննայի ետուր զաւակ՝ զՄարիամ աստուածածինն²³¹ և որպէս բժշկեցեր զճուրն առ եղիսեիւ մարգարեիւ, և ետուր զաւակ յերկրին այն:²³² * Եւ արդ բարեխօսութեամբ սոցին տուր զաւակ ծառայիս աստուծոյ:²³³

* Որպէս աչք ծառայի 'ի ձեռն տեառն իւրոյ. և որպէս աչք աղախնոյ 'ի ձեռն տիկնոջ իւրոյ: * Այնպէս են աչք մեր առ քեզ տեր աստուած մեր, մինչև ողորմեսցիս 'ի վերայ մեր:²³⁴

Ամեն ամեն ասեմ ձեզ՝ զի լասջիք և ողբասջիք. և աշխարհ խնդասցէ: * Դուք տրտմեսջիք՝ այլ տրտմութիւնն ձեր յուրախութիւն եղիցի: * Կին յորժամ ծնանիցի տրտմութիւն է նմա՝ զի հասեալ է ժամ նորա. այլ յորժամ ծնցի զմանուկն ո՛չ ևս յիշէ զնեղութիւնն վասն խնդութեան՝ զի ծնաւ մարդ յաշխարհ:²³⁵

Prayer for childbirth.²³⁰

Consider the entreaties of your servant and maidservant, and give them a child; for as you were pleased [by] the entreaties of Anna and gave her a child, the great Samuel; and gave Elizabeth a child, John the Baptist; and gave Joachim and Anna a child, Mary the Bearer of God;²³¹ and as you healed the water in the time of Elisha the Prophet, and gave a child to that land;²³² so also now, through the intercession of these same ones, give a child to this servant of God.²³³

As the eyes of a servant [are] upon the hand of his lord, and as the eyes of a maidservant [are] upon the hand of her lady, so our eyes are to you, O Lord our God, until you have mercy on us.²³⁴

²³⁰ See Feydit 238–239 (Text 2–LXXX).

²³¹ See note 65 above.

²³² 2 Kings (4 Kings LXX) 2:19–23, 4:8–37.

²³³ See note 98 above.

²³⁴ Psa. 123:2 (122:2 LXX); although *servant*, *maidservant*, *lord* and *lady* are plural in the Psalm. However, the Zohrabean Bible notes that some manuscripts have these words in the singular, as here.

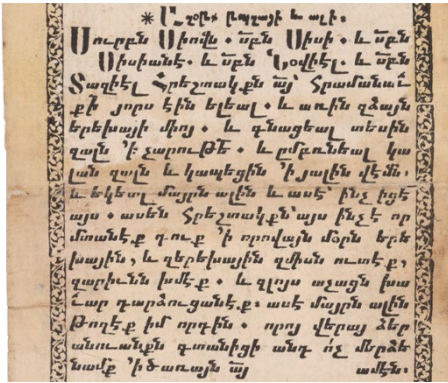
Part 25

Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, and the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be [turned] into joy. A woman when she gives birth has sorrow, for her hour has come; but when she shall have given birth to the infant, she will no longer remember the anguish, on account of the joy that a human being has been born in the world.²³⁵

²³⁵ John 16:20–21.

Part 26

*Աղօթք թաղայի և ալի:²³⁶



Սուրբն Սիովն. սուրբն Սիսի. և սուրբն Սիսիանէ. և սուրբն Նովիէլ. և սուրբն Տազիէլ Հրեշտակքն աստուծոյ՝ հրամանաւ քրիստոսի յորս էին ելեալ. և առին²³⁷ զձայն երեխայի իմոյ. և զնացեալ տեսին զալն 'ի չարութեան. և ըմբռնեալ կալան զալն և կապեցին 'ի յալին վէմն: և եկեալ մայրն ալն և ասէ՝ ինչ իցէ այս ասեն հրեշտակքն այս ինչէ որ մտանէք դուք 'ի որովայն մօրն երեխային, և զերեխային զմիսն ուտէք, զարիւնն խմէք, և զլոյս աչացն խաւար դարձուցանէք: ասէ մայրն ալն թողէք իմ որդին և որոյ վերայ ձեր անուանքն գտանիցի անդ ոչ մերձենամք²⁴⁰ 'ի ծառայն ալն:

Prayer against *t'pgha* and *al*.²³⁶

The holy Sion, the holy Sisi, and the holy Sisianus, and the holy Noviel, and the holy Taziel, the Angels of God, by the command of

²³⁶ See Feydit: 312–314 (Text ԸԺԷ–CXVII). See also Appendix E for a lengthier incantation narrative involving these demons, with a discussion of characteristics in common with similar narratives in other cultural traditions.

The *al* (ալ) or *alk'* (ալք) is a demon that enters into the wombs of pregnant women to kill them and/or their unborn children. (In some Armenian dialects, *al* is expressed as the *plurale tantum* form *alk'*.) See Part 24 for an illustration of a sword-bearing saint confronting an *al* holding the innards of its victim. For portions of other hmayils with illustrations of *alk'*, see Appendix C, Figs. 8, 9 and 28.

Ghevont Alishan (1820–1901), the great poet, scholar and priest of the Mkhitarist Congregation in Venice, discusses the *alk'* as follows:

As an ordinary word, *Alk'* means deep places, like abysses, and corresponds to the word *Hell* of the Goths, Germans and those of the same tongue, which means Hell. In the north, the Goddess of Hell was also called Hel; [the place was] suitable for the inhabitation of *Alk'*, which live in damp places. And they mostly harmed women in childbirth and children, as if they were adversaries of their Eternal Brides. Such Spirits are, says Grigor Tatewats'i the Moralist, "who in the water and the childbirth of women, are called *Alk'*, for with the wet disease [that is, lust] they destroy souls, and in births [they destroy] bodies and souls." (Alishan: 240.)

Manuk Abeghyan also discusses the *alk'*:

There is a category of evil spirits which are especially hostile to human reproduction. These spirits are called *als* (*alk'*) and appear as bristly and shaggy half-animal half-human figures. In one charm prayer the *al* is directly called an evil beast. They are usually described as having fiery eyes, bronze claws, iron teeth, and the tusks of a wild boar. They hold an iron axe in their hands. Their habitations are outdoors, on mountains and in sandy places. They like to sit in the road at sandy spots. From there they come and enter homes, staying in stables in dark corners or near the eaves. They are usually called "men," but both sexes are represented, and they multiply like humans. The mother of the *al* frequently appears in folk tales and spells. They have a king who lives chained and constantly shrieking in the abyss, buried up to the neck in lead.

One legend says that God created the *al* to be a comrade to Adam. However, they did not suit each other since Adam was made of earth while the *al* was made of fire. When God saw that, he created Eve. From that time forth, the *al* has been inimical to Eve and to her sex. It imposes sexual abstinence on young couples, enters the womb, and destroys the fetus. With these methods it increases infertility.

Above all, the *al* is a danger to those giving birth and to the newborn. One spell says:

I make the children of women wither

I dry up the milk
I darken the eyes
I suck their brains out and make them dumb
And take babies from the womb prematurely.
I eat the flesh of the babies and drink their blood,
And I darken the light of their eyes.

There is another one which says:

I sit down on the childbearing woman
And make her ears burn.
I pull out the liver
And strangle the mother and the child.
Our food is the flesh of the woman giving birth, and the child.
We steal fetuses of seven months from the mother
And take them, deaf and dumb, to our king in the abyss.

It appears that the *als* are also spirits of lust which visit women in their sleep. (Abeghyan: 118–119).

Prof. James R. Russell connects the *alk'* with Lilith of Jewish tradition:

Let us look first at the sources of the Armenian *hmayil* and its typical content. Its main feature is an invocation against the *Al*, or Child-stealing Witch. Belief in this demonic being is ancient and widespread in the Near and Middle East. *Lamashtu*, the Child-stealing Witch of ancient Mesopotamia, rides an ass. She is a fearsome lion-headed monster, with a woman's body and a bird's claw-like feet, grasping a serpent in each hand; at her breasts, she suckles a black dog and a pig. This demoness hates mortal women, and it is her particular function to kill their babies. On a talismanic tablet she appears with the demon of an evil wind, *Pazuzu*. The tablet depicts also a patient attended by doctors. The latter wear robes designed to resemble fish—the perennial symbol of immortality. There are three more relevant Mesopotamian demons—all of storm winds: *lilu*, *lilitu*, and (*w*)*ardat lili*—the last two being female. The latter fly through the air and find men whom they seduce. But their relations with a man are not of the kind he has with his wife, for they have no babies, and give no milk. They are unfulfilled, and bitter, and, taking on the role of the first demon mentioned, *Lamashtu*, they attack women in childbirth. So, this is the origin of the famous demoness of later Jewish and Christian lore, *Lilith*. ...

In Jewish folklore, *Lilith* is believed to have been not a supernatural being at first, but the first wife of Adam, made from earth as he was, and not from his rib, either—more an equal than a helpmate. Once, the first human couple quarreled: *Lilith* pronounced the ineffable Name of God, the Tetragrammaton, and was instantly spirited into the air. She flew away. Adam complained of his loneliness to God, who dispatched three angels to find *Lilith*. These become the triumvirate of saints commonly encountered in Christian spells. They caught up with her at the Red Sea, where she declared she was determined to kill any children Adam might father on a second wife. They wanted to drown her then, but *Lilith* begged mercy, and they struck a deal: they would protect from her any child born in a home where their names were invoked. The three are named *Sinoi*, *Sasanoy*, and *Samangluf*, and are invoked in various texts, including the magical “Book of the Angel of Secrets”, the *Sefer Raziel*. ... So *Lilith* appears as the succubus who flies to sleeping men for spectral and barren intercourse, and, in her boundless bitterness against the fertile daughters of Eve, acts as the murderous Child-stealing Witch. ...

... The charm against the Child-stealing Witch even finds its way into Shakespeare's *King Lear*, act 3, scene iv: “St. Withold footed thrice the (*w*)old;/ He met the night-mare and her nine-fold;/ Bid her alight/ And her troth plight;/ And aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!” Here, the *Lilith*, or night-mare succubus, has children; and her murderous forays seem to be as much for the purpose of feeding them, as for vengeance against mortal, child-bearing women. We can infer this from an Armenian tale, in which the Child-stealing Witch is called *Al*, from Iranian *āl*, “scarlet”, referring to the puerperal fever with which she strikes women.

Armenian tradition calls a fiery being named *Al* the first wife of Adam, too; so there is no doubt she is the same being called *Lilith*, or Night-mare, elsewhere. In the Armenian tale, the *Al*, called in the dialect of *Kharberd*, Turkish *Harput*, *Elk'* (with the Classical plural, *k'*, as *pluralis tantum*), takes a young mother's liver, but cannot eat it unless she dips it first in water—perhaps a recollection of *Lilith*'s flight to the Red Sea. She is caught with a metal pin stuck into her clothes, for iron pins or scissors are a common charm against these monsters; and, once she is captured, we learn she has many children herself, and has stolen the liver in order to feed them. She returns the human mother's liver to her, and becomes her servant. Eventually the *Elk'* is freed, after promising not to harm seven generations of the family, only making their wooden spoons break

Christ went out to hunt, and heard²³⁷ the cry of a baby. And going [there] they saw the *al* [engaged] in wickedness. And seizing [it] they held the *al* and bound it to the Stone of the *Al*. And the mother of the *al* came and said, “What might this be?”²³⁸ The angels said, “What is this,²³⁹ that you enter into the womb of the baby’s mother, eat the baby’s flesh, drink its blood, and turn the light of its eyes into darkness?” The mother of the *al* said, “Pardon my son, [for] upon

easily. Maybe this proviso has to do with the relative potency of iron. The *Al* is shown in Armenian talismanic scrolls as a long-clawed, horned, bearded, tailed, club-footed monster, pitch-black, holding the innards of some victim, as in the folk tale from Kharberd. ... The Armenian talismans against the *Al* invoke three saints, Siovn (i.e., Zion), Sisi (perhaps from Sis, the capital of Cilician Armenia), and Sisiane (i.e., the Greek vocative of Sisianos): the same triad, and same story, as in the Jewish magical texts—and both in their present form derive from a Byzantine Greek prototype, as Gaster pointed out long ago. (Russell 2011: 10–14.)

Less information is available about the origin and nature of the demon known as *t’pgha* (թպղա). It is often mentioned together with an *al* in the titles of incantations. Alishan states: “In our divination books, the *T’pgha* is remembered only along with the next evil and horrible spirit [described in his book], which is *Al* or *Alk’*.” (Alishan: 240). However, the *t’pgha* usually does not appear in the texts of the incantations themselves. When it does, it often shares the same characteristics as the *al*. Thus it would appear that two separate demons of antiquity were merged into one demon in Armenian folklore, with both names surviving in the tradition. Tadevos Tadevosyan, Associate Professor at Vanadzor State University in Armenia, and graduate student Shushanna Kotsinyan discuss the *t’pgha* as follows:

Another evil spirit, which harms women in labor and newborns, is popularly called *t’pgha* (*t’ghpa*, *t’epgha*, *t’epgh*; թպղա, թղպա, թեպղա, թեպղ). According to G. Acharyan, this word goes back to the Persian *tabāh*, ‘defiler’, ‘villain’. The scholar also cites forms of the adjective թպղոտ, ‘ill with *t’pgha*’, and the verb թպղոտիլ ‘to fall ill with *t’pgha*’. G. Alishan attributes the word *t’pgha* to the Greek *θεοβουλη*, ‘the will of God’, and notes that this name (Theobula) was borne by the mother of Myrtilus—the son of Zeus Hephaestus or Hermes. However, he is rather skeptical about his own hypothesis. G. Kapantsyan connects *t’pgha* with the Hittite god of harvest and fertility Telepinu. This magnanimous deity turned into an evil demon as a result of complex cultural and political contacts between the Hittites and the Armenians. S. Harutyunyan connects *t’pgha* with the Sumerian-Akkadian demon Tabal (Khumut-Tabal), who transports the souls of the dead across the river. The connection of *t’pgha* with the female Syrian demon—Tabi’ah, who seduces men and kidnaps children from the cradle—is not excluded. It is possible that the term comes from the name of the Arabic female demon Teb’ah, which is derived from the verb *tabaʿa*, ‘to follow’.

T’pgha is both the personified spirit of the disease and the disease itself. The disease affects women in labor, newborns, older children, and even adolescents. ... If a woman’s children are born dead or die early, then people say that she has *t’pgha*. To get rid of *t’pgha*, they resorted to the help of sorcerers... (Toporkov: 346.)

²³⁷ առիմ (*arin*), “(they) heard”, literally “(they) received”.

²³⁸ Reading ինչ իցէ այս contextually with a question mark as ի՞նչ իցէ այս, “What might this be?”. See also the following note.

²³⁹ Reading այս ինչ է contextually with a question mark as այս ի՞նչ է, “What is this...?”. The narrative of the prayer appears to be distorted here. In lengthier incantations with a similar story, the angel saints typically ask from one to three questions: “What are you?” (sometimes with an invective such as “O foul living thorn-bush”), “What deeds are you orchestrating?”, and “What is your name?”. The demon responds that it is an *al* or the mother of the *al*, and provides a recitation of the many evil deeds it does to the mother and child in the womb. (Harutyunyan: 130–139; Feydit: 306–315; see also Appendix E.) In the condensed version of the narrative here, it appears that the question by the angel saints, “What is this...?”, is the standard “What deeds are you orchestrating?” question, combined with the *al*’s answer that recites its foul deeds. The prior question by the *al*, “What might this be?”, might be a reversal of the standard “What are you?” question asked by the angel saints.

Part 26

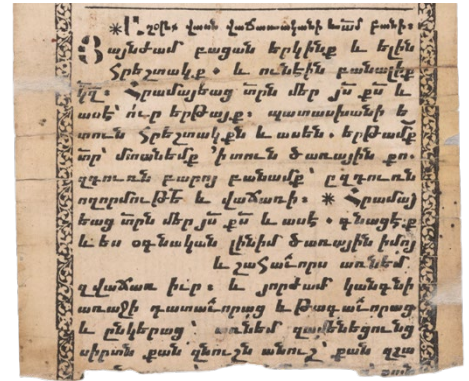
whatever [place] your names appear, there we will not come near to the servant of God (*name*).²⁴⁰ Amen.”

²⁴⁰ The names of the angel saints act as protective words to keep the *als* away. *Cf.* also the protection afforded by the angels’ names in Part 11. In some narratives, the names of the demon’s children (usually twelve of them) are disclosed, by which the angels gain power over them (*ibid.*; see also Appendix C, Fig. 12, and Appendix E).

Part 27

* Աղօթք վասն վաճառականի և ամենայն քանի:²⁴¹

Յայնժամ բացան երկինք և ելին հրեշտակք. և ունեին քանակիք ԿՁ:²⁴² Հրամայեաց տէրն մեր յիսուս քրիստոս և ասէ՝ ո՛ր²⁴³ երթայք: պատասխանի ետուն հրեշտակքն և ասեն. երթամք տէր՝ մտանեմք 'ի տուն ծառային քո. զդուռն բարոյ բանամք՝ ըզդուռն ողորմութեան և վաճառի: * Հրամայեաց տէրն մեր յիսուս քրիստոս և ասէ. գնացէք և ես օգնական լինիմ ծառային իմոյ (*name*) և շահաւորս առնեմ զվաճառ իւր: և յորժամ կանգնի առաջի դատաւորաց և թագաւորաց և ընկերաց՝²⁴⁴ առնեմ զամենեցունց սիրտն քան զնուշն անուշ՝ քան զշաքարն²⁴⁵ քաղցր՝ քան զմումն կակուղ՝ քան զջուր խոնարհ՝ քան զարեգակն պայծառ՝ քան զլուսինն 'ի լրումն. փառօք և պատուօք 'ի դէմ²⁴⁶ ծառայիս իմոյ (*name*)



Prayer for the merchant and all [his] activity.²⁴¹

Then heaven was opened and the angels came out, and they had 66 keys.²⁴² Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded and said, “Where are you going?”²⁴³ The angels answered and said, “We go, O Lord, [and] we enter into the house of your servant. We open the door of good, the door of mercy and commerce.” Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded and said, “Go, and I [will] be helper to my servant (*name*), and I [will] make his commerce profitable. And when he stands before judges and kings and peers,²⁴⁴ I [will] make the heart of everyone more fragrant than almond,²⁴⁵ sweeter than sugar, softer than beeswax, more humble than water, brighter than the sun, than the light of the full moon, with glory and honor toward²⁴⁶ this servant of mine (*name*).”

²⁴¹ See Feydit: 292–293 (Text ԸԹ–CIX).

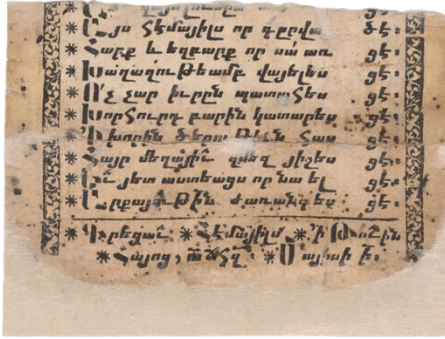
²⁴² “366 keys” in other versions of this prayer (*ibid.*), which is symbolically more appropriate (see note 27 above). It is likely that somewhere in the course of transmission of this prayer from one document to another, the number Յ, ‘300’, before ԿՁ, ‘66’, was inadvertently omitted.

²⁴³ Reading ո՛ր contextually with a question mark as ո՛ր.

²⁴⁴ “before judges and kings and peers”, that is, before those with whom the merchant will be doing business, which Christ will facilitate.

²⁴⁵ The hmayil contains a lacuna of approx. five lines (four lines at the end of this part, and the top portion of the first line of the next part). The missing text was derived from a similar hmayil (see Appendix C, Fig. 29).

²⁴⁶ ‘ի դէմ (*i dēm*) “toward”, literally “in (the) face”, can also be rendered “before” or “in front of”.



- * Աստուած վայելումըն տացէ:²⁴⁷
 - * Այս հեմայիլս որ գրըված է:
 - * Հարք և եղբարք որ սա առցէ:²⁴⁸
 - * Խաղաղութեամբ վայելեսցէ:
 - * Ո՛չ չար իւրըն պատահեսցէ:
 - * Խորհուրդ բարին կատարեսցէ:
 - * Ի խորին²⁴⁹ ծերութիւն հասցէ:
 - * Հայր մեղայիւ զմեզ յիշեսցէ:
 - * Եւ յետ աստեացս որ նա ելցէ:
 - * Արքայութիւնն ժառանգեսցէ:
-
- * Գրեցաւ * Հեմայիլս * Ի Թուին * Հայոց, ռճհճ²⁵⁰
- * Մայիսի Ի:

God shall give enjoyment,²⁴⁷
 [By] this hmayil that is written.
 Fathers and brothers who receive this one,²⁴⁸
 Shall enjoy [it] with peace.
 Evil shall not be encountered,
 Good intention shall be achieved,
 A ripe²⁴⁹ old age shall be attained.
 The Father shall remember us by [our] contrition.
 And he who departs this world,
 Shall inherit the Kingdom.

This hmayil was written in 1176 of the Armenian Era²⁵⁰
 on May 20.

²⁴⁷ See note 245 above. The text of this colophon contains a number of rhyming verbs in the subjunctive mood, which we chose to render in the sense of something that will occur at some point, now or in the future, for example, “God *shall* give enjoyment”. These verbs can also be rendered in the sense of a wish or desire, for example, “Let God *give* enjoyment” or “May God *give* enjoyment”, which wording (let/may) is often used in translating subjunctive verbs in prayers, including a number of times in the hmayil.

²⁴⁸ Other hmayils with an almost identical verse colophon follow this line with Մայրք, քոյրք, մանկսիք եւ ՚ի նոցէ (read as նոցանէ, which was apparently modified in the verse for the end rhyme), “Mothers, sisters, children of them as well” (Ghazaryan 2018: 81).

²⁴⁹ See note 159 above.

²⁵⁰ The Armenian Era, which commenced in 551 A.D., was officially adopted by the Armenian Church as the basis of its calendar during the 2nd Council of Dvin in 554 A.D. Thus Թուին Հայոց ՌՃՀՁ = 1176 A.E. + 551 years = 1727 A.D.

Appendix A

Sections of the Hmayil as Printed



Woodcut Illustrations in the Hmayil

1. Decorative arch above an urn with flowers (see Part 1).



2. God the Father (see Part 2).



3. Medallions with figures of the Twelve Apostles (see Part 2).



Woodcut Illustrations in the Hmayil

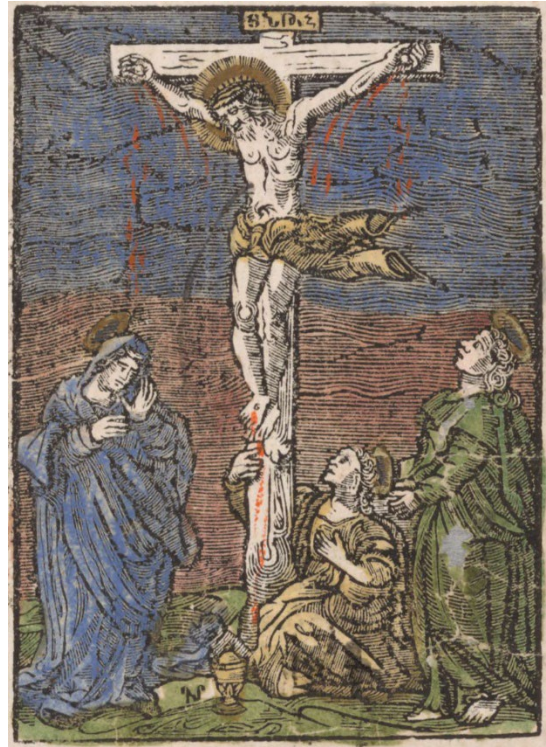
4. Lamb holding a cross on a staff (see Part 2).



5. Christ and the Cross in a chalice (see Part 2 and note 71).



6. The Crucifixion of Christ, from a woodcut by Grigor Marzuanets'i (see Part 3 and note 74).

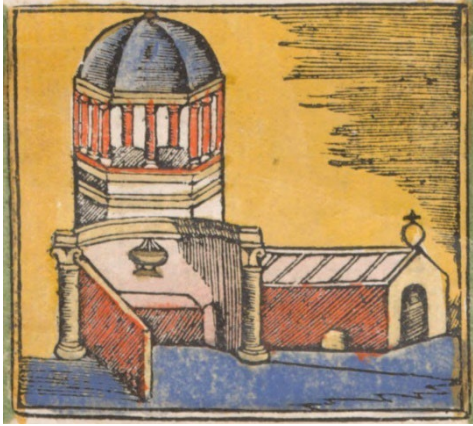


7. Decorative pedestal with two birds (see Part 4).



Woodcut Illustrations in the Hmayil

8. Church of the Sepulchre (see Part 5).



9. The Virgin Mary standing on a crescent moon, holding the infant Christ, and surrounded by radiant light, from a woodcut by Grigor Marzuanets'i (see Part 6 and note 93).



10. Saint John the Baptist holding a cross-staff, with a lamb (see Part 7 and note 95).



11. Saint Stephen the Protomartyr holding a miniature church and a censer (see Part 8 and note 99).



Woodcut Illustrations in the Hmayil

12. Saint Gregory the Illuminator holding a bishop's crozier (see Part 9 and note 102).



13. The Archangel Gabriel holding the soul of a deceased person (see Part 11 and note 120).



14. Six-winged seraph holding an emblem with the letters UṠ UṠ UṠ SṠ (see Part 12 and note 125).



15. The Sacrifice of Isaac, from a woodcut by Grigor Marzuanets'i (see Part 15 and note 153).



Woodcut Illustrations in the Hmayil

16. St. Gregory of Narek (see Part 16 and note 171).



18. St. Sargis on horseback, with his son Martiros (see Part 19).



17. St. George on horseback, holding a lance (see Part 18).



19. The Evangelist Matthew writing his Gospel, with an angel (see Part 20).



Woodcut Illustrations in the Hmayil

20. The Evangelist Mark writing his Gospel, with a winged lion (see Part 21).



21. The Evangelist Luke writing his Gospel, with a calf (see Part 22).



22. The Evangelist John writing his Gospel, with an eagle, from a woodcut by Grigor Marzuanets'i (see Part 23 and note 215).



23. Sword-bearing saint confronting the demon *al* (see Part 24 and note 224).



Appendix C

Other Hmayils



Fig. 1. Hmayils in the possession of the Zohrab Information Center, with a range of scribal ability and artistic skill reflected in the four handwritten hmayils. The hmayil at the right is open to St. Nersēs Shnorhali’s prayer “With Faith I Confess” (*Hawatov Khostovanim*). The hmayil in the center shows a passage from the Gospel of Matthew, and is also shown in Fig. 21 below. Portions of the hmayil at the second from the right are shown in Figs. 4–7 below.

(Photo Credit : J. S. Arlen, Zohrab Information Center.)

Other Hmayils



Fig. 2A. The first section of a 1725 printed hmayil similar to the one that is the subject of this study, which begins with the following prayer, in which the named beneficiaries are written:²⁵¹

ՀԱՅՐ ՍՈՒՐԲ ՏՈՒՐ մեզ գրանդդ քո, Որդիդ սուրբ ցոյց
մեզ գրեզ, Հոգիդ սուրբ մաքրեա՛ ըզմիտս մեր և սգայ-
ութիւնս յամենայն փորձութենէ և յամենայն մեղաց
փրկեա՛ և Օգնակա՛ն և պահապան լեր ծառայի աստուծոյ
մանուկին սահակին Ամէն:

Holy Father give us your Word, Holy Son show us Yourself, Holy Spirit cleanse our minds and senses from all temptation; and from all sins save [us] and be helper and guardian of this servant of God Manuk [and] Sahak. Amen.

After the prayer are four colored illustrations, the first of which is of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, with the serpent entwined around the Tree of Knowledge. The title below the illustration reads:

Խափվիլն ի սատանայէ Աղամ-
այ և Եւայի. և մերկանալն
'ի լուսոյ, "The deceiving by Satan of Adam and Eve, and [their] being stripped of the light."²⁵² The second illustration is the Annunciation to Mary, with a title that reads: Աւետիքն Հրեշտակապետին առ սուրբ կոյսն Մարիամ, "The Good News of the Archangel Gabriel to the holy Virgin Mary."



Fig. 2B. The remainder of the first section of this hmayil. The third illustration is a Nativity scene, with a title that reads: Ծնունդն Յիսուսի Քրիստոյի. Տեառն Աստուծոյ մերոյ, "The Birth of Jesus Christ, the Lord our God." The fourth illustration is the Presentation of Mary at the Temple, with the Holy Spirit bestowing its grace from above. The title of the illustration reads: Սրբուհոյ կոյսին Մարիամոյ, ընծայումն ի տաճարն, "The Presentation of the holy Virgin Mary in the temple."

(Source: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2014373043>, accessed 25 February 2022.)

²⁵¹ Based on another similar hmayil, this section appears to be missing a small decorative illustration and the title Աղօթք առ սուրբ երրորդութեան, "Prayer to the Holy Trinity."

²⁵² The title reflects the patristic understanding that Adam and Eve, prior to their disobedience to God and expulsion from the Garden, were clothed with light and/or glory. See note 46 above.

Other Hmayils



Fig. 3A. The second section of the same hmayil, with four colored illustrations. The first is a symbolic genealogical tree, from Abraham at the bottom to Mary and Jesus at the top, with twelve kings on the other branches.²⁵³ The title below the illustration reads: ՅԵՐԼՈՒՍԱՍԱՆ ԴԱԽԱՎԵՐՔՆ, “The Twelve Patriarchs”, referring to the sons of Jacob who founded the twelve tribes of Israel. The second illustration depicts the scene from Daniel Ch. 3, in which three young Jewish men are cast by King Nebuchadnezzar into a blazing furnace. The winged figure in the furnace is the angel of God, who came down into the furnace and shook the flame of the fire out of the furnace (Dan. 3:49). The title below the illustration reads: ՍՈՒՐՔ ԵՐԵՔ ՄԱՆԼՈՒՆՔՆ, “The Three Holy Youths”, that is, these three young Jewish men.²⁵⁴



Fig. 3B. The remainder of the second section of this hmayil. The third illustration, with no title, is of a bishop (likely St. Nersēs Shnorhali) in full liturgical raiment, with two angels holding a halo behind his head. The fourth illustration is the same decorative arch above an urn with flowers, as in Part 1 above, although colored differently. Following this illustration, in the next section (not shown here), is St. Nersēs Shnorhali’s “With Faith I Confess”, as in Part 1.

²⁵³ At the bottom-left are the letters ԳՄ (*GM*) for Grigor Marzuanets’i, the artist who carved the illustration woodcut.

²⁵⁴ The Armenian version of Daniel Ch. 3, and other versions based on the Septuagint, includes a passage known as the “Song of the Three Holy Youths”, a hymn of praise that they sing after the angel extinguishes the fire (Dan. 3:52–90), which has been incorporated into a number of liturgical services.

Other Hmayils



Fig. 4. Portion of an 1860 handwritten hmayil in the possession of the Zohrab Information Center, with intersecting diagonal texts in a cross-hatched pattern, and crosses in the boxes. The first diagonal \searrow text is a narrative of the Sacrifice of Isaac, and the second diagonal text \nearrow is for the intercession of the divine Holy Signs of Christ. (See Part 15 and notes 154 and 166 above.)

(Source: Russell 2011: Plate 12.)



Fig. 5. Portion of the same hmayil, with an illustration of a sword-bearing saint on horseback (likely St. George) confronting two *vishaps* (dragons).

(Source: Russell 2011: Plate 10.)

Other Hmayils

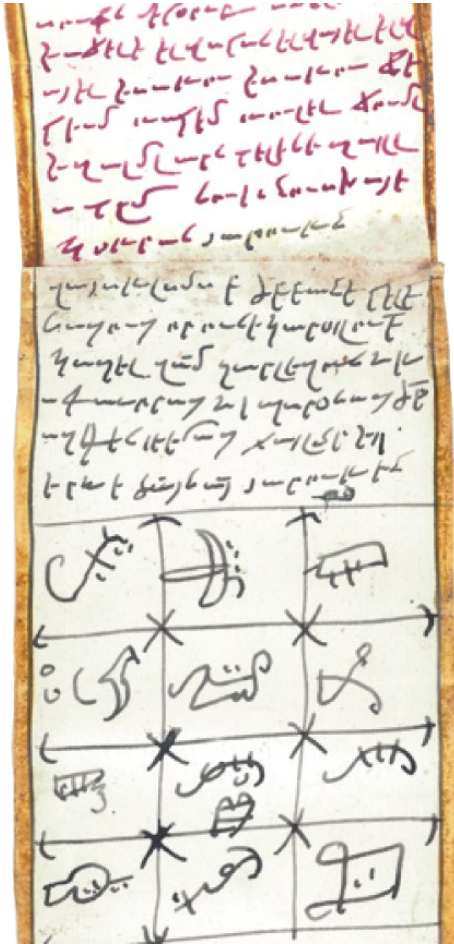


Fig. 6. Portion of the same hmayil, with mystical symbols in a grid of squares. At the end of the incantation, written after *ծսոսյն ասսնւն*, “the servant of God”, is the named beneficiary: *յարութիւն*, “(of) Yarut”.

(Source: Russell 2011: Plate 11.)



Fig. 7. Portion of the same hmayil, with an illustration of Christ and the Cross with astrological and other symbols. The title of the prayer below the illustration reads: *աղօթք պահպան ասսնւն*, “Prayer [to] guardian God”.

(Source: Russell 2011: Plate 8.)

Other Hmayils



Fig. 8. Portion of a handwritten hmayil in the Matenadaran, with an illustration of St. Paul confronting an *alk'* that holds the innards of its victim. The title of the incantation, below the illustration, reads: զիւր ալքի և ծնուն կանաց չար թփղի: „Writing against *alk'* and [for protecting] the childbirth of women [from] evil *t'p'gh*.”

(Source: Toporkov: Plate 14.)



Fig. 9. Portion of a handwritten hmayil in the Matenadaran, with an illustration of a sword-bearing saint (St. Anton and St. Nshiat' are named in the text) confronting an *alk'* that holds the innards of its victim, next to another *alk'* on all fours. The title of the incantation below the illustration reads: զիւր ալքի և թպղայի, „Writing against *alk'* and *t'p'gha*”. In the text above the illustration, written in different ink in the space after ծառայիւն աստուծոյ, „of the servant of God”, is the named beneficiary of the incantation: մարտիւ, „(of) Mart”.

(Source: Toporkov: Plate 15.)

Other Hmayils



Fig. 10. Portion of a handwritten hmayil with a title followed by six rows of letters in squares and two rows of symbols. The title at the top, with the named beneficiaries, reads: Այլ գիր կապ և տալիսմաս [read as Թալսամասն] տպղի ընդ դէմ ծանայիս աստուծոյ տօնէին և զաւակացն ամէն, “Another binding text and talisman for *tpgh* [that comes] against this servant of God *Tōnē* and her children amen”. The rows of letters that follow, which contain the words փառք աստուծոյ յիսուսի քրիստոսի, “glory to God Jesus Christ”, possibly represent the first letters of the words of a secret prayer-incantation, the power of which is enhanced by the placement of the letters in a grid of magic squares.

(Source: <http://greenstone.flb.sci.am/gsd/collect/hmayilne/index/assoc/HASH487e.dir/6AH-1.pdf>, accessed 5 January 2022.)

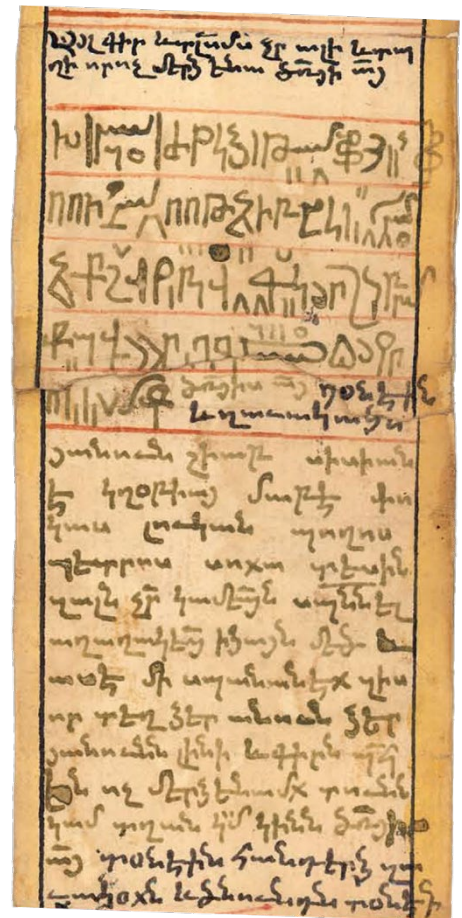


Fig. 11. Portion of the same handwritten hmayil with five rows of symbols and letters. The title at the top of the incantation reads: Այլ գիր և տալիսմաս [read as Թալսամասն] չար ալի եւ տպղի որ ոչ մերձենա ծանայի աստուծոյ, “Another writing and talisman for evil *al* and *tpgh* so that they do not come near the servant of God”. The beneficiaries of the incantation are written at the end of the last line of symbols: տօնէին և զաւակացն, “*Tōnē* and her children”; and also at the bottom: տօնէին հանդերձ զաւակօքն և ծնունդն տօնէի, “*Tōnē* together with her children and the offspring of *Tōnē*”.

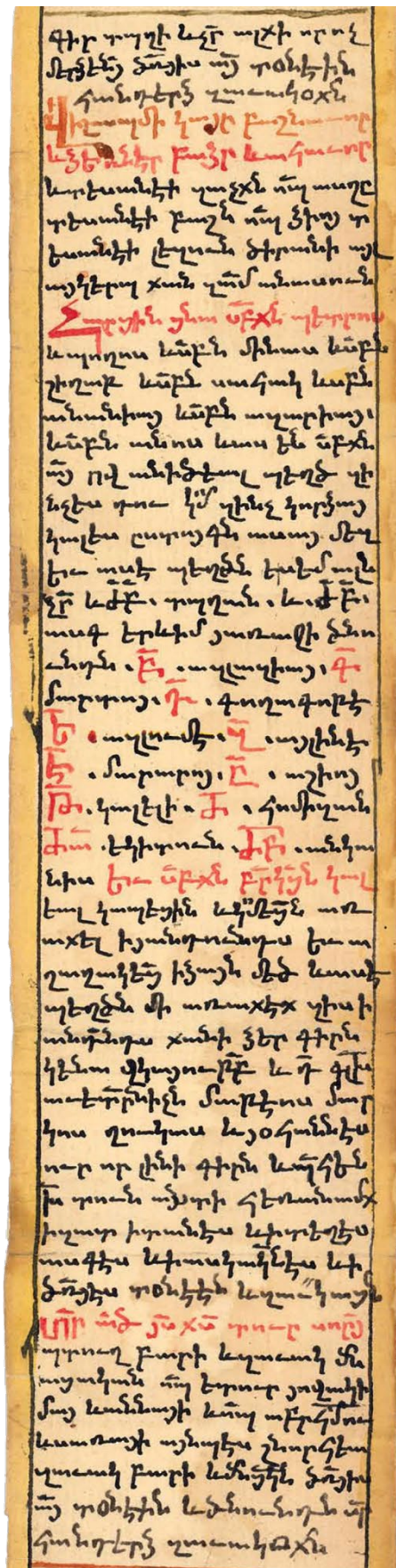


Fig. 12. Portion of the same handwritten hmayil. The title at the top, with the named beneficiaries, reads: գիր տպղի եւ չար արքի որ ոչ մերձենայ ծառայիս աստուծոյ տօնին հանդերձ զաւակօքն, "Writing for *tpgh* and evil *alk'* so that they do not come near this servant of God *Tōnē* together with her children." The incantation has a narrative that opens with the appearance of a *vishap*, followed by the encounter of a demon by Saints Peter, Paul, Minas, Ananias, Azariah, and Anos. In response to their questions asking what it is and what deeds it orchestrates, the demon says it is an *al*, and provides the names of eleven of her twelve children (the *vishap* being her first-born). In anger, the Saints bind the *al*, intending to send it to the abyss. The *al* then promises to stay 40 houses away from that in which the writing (that is, this incantation) is kept, and from *Tōnē* and the children. Following the narrative is a prayer to the Lord God Jesus Christ: տուր սրբայ պտուղ բարի, "give her good fruit", that is, a healthy child, and like sons given to Joachim and Anna, and to Abraham and Sarah, to: շնորհեա զաւակ բարի և մնացական ծառայիս աստուծոյ տօնին և ծնունդն սրբա հանդերձ զաւակօքն, "graciously grant a good child also to the steadfast servant of God *Tōnē* and her offspring together with her children."

Other Hmayils

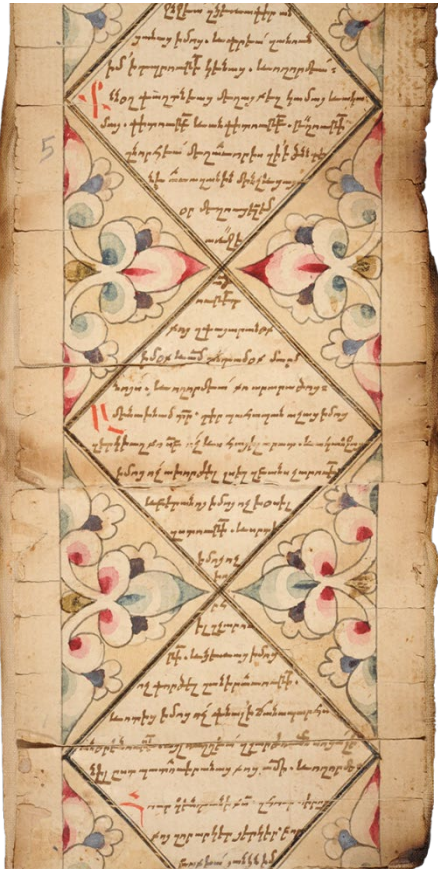


Fig. 13. Portion of a handwritten hmayil in the possession of the Armenian Church Diocese of Iraq, with St. Nersēs Shnorhali's prayer "With Faith I Confess" (*Hawatov Khostovanim*).

(Source: <https://www.vhmm.org/readingRoom/view/136277>, accessed 26 June, 2022.)



Fig. 14. Portion of the same handwritten hmayil, with illustrations of God the Father, the figures of the Twelve Apostles, and a lamb holding a cross on a staff (representing Christ as the Lamb of God), similar to the printed illustrations in Part 2.

Other Hmayils



Fig. 15. Portion of the same handwritten hmayil, with an illustration of the Archangel Gabriel as the *grogh* (գրող) taking the soul of a deceased person (see note 120). The title below the illustration reads: Աղօթք հրէշտակաց աստուծոյ վասն պահպանութեան, “Prayer to the Archangels of God for protection.” The beginning of the prayer closely matches that of the first prayer in Part 11 above: “Gabriel, Michael, Raphael... and all angels and archangels who have authority over every type of sword,” and is here followed by a list of six types of swords. The prayer concludes with a similar request that the angels չորացուցէք եւ փայտ դարձուցէք ՚ի դիմաց ծառ-այիս աստուծոյ վարտաւիհն, “cause [them] to wither and turn [to] wood before this servant of God Vartan.”

Fig. 16. Portion of the same handwritten hmayil with an illustration of St. George spearing a *vishap* (dragon) through its mouth with a lance. The title below the illustration reads: Աղօթք սրբոյն գէորգայ զինաւորիւն, “Prayer of St George the Soldier.” The prayer that follows is different than that of Part 18 above.



Other Hmayils



Fig. 17. Portion of a printed hmayil with an illustration of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in heaven. The prayer above the illustration, which likely had a title that was lost due to damage, asks Christ to protect the supplicant, through the intercession of St. Gregory the Illuminator, St. Gregory the Theologian, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory the Wonderworker, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Agrigento, Gregory of Aghbak, Gregory of Narek, և այլ ամենայն սրբոց, “and all the other saints”.²⁵⁵ Note also the attempt to preserve the hmayil with transparent tape on the edges.

(Source: <http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/hmayilne/index/assoc/HASH01dc.dir/9AH-1.pdf>, accessed 5 January 2022.)

Fig. 18. Portion of the same printed hmayil with an illustration of an angel spearing a *vishap* (dragon) through its mouth with a lance. The title below the illustration reads: Աղօթք Հրեշտակապետի ընդ մեզ պահպանութեան, “Prayer to the Archangel for our protection.” The beginning of the prayer closely matches that of the first prayer in Part 11 above: “Gabriel, Michael, Raphael... and all angels and archangels who have authority over every type of sword...” but the remainder of the (incomplete) prayer is different.



²⁵⁵ See Feydit: 164–165 (Text LQ–XXXVI, Var. E–G). Gregory of Aghbak is not found in Feydit, and his identity is unknown to us.

Other Hmayils



Fig. 19A. Portion of an 1865 handwritten hmayil in the possession of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, with an illustration of God the Father and the figures of the Twelve Apostles, very similar to the printed illustration in Part 2, followed by almost identical text: Երկոտասան Առաքեալքն Քրիստոսի Աստուծոյ մերոյ բարեխօս լերուք ծառայիս Աստուծոյ, “Twelve Apostles of Christ our God, intercede for this servant of God.”²⁵⁶

(Source: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b53164662c>, accessed 12 September 2022.)

Fig. 19B. Continuation of the handwritten hmayil. The first illustration is of a lamb holding a cross on a staff, followed by Գառն աստուծոյ որ բառնայ զմեղս աշխարհի. ողորմեա՛ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ, “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on this servant of God,” similar to that of Part 2. The second illustration is of Christ and the Cross in a chalice, very similar to the printed illustration in Part 2. The text below it reads: Քրիստոս ըսկուն մեջն պատարագի որ բառնայ զմեղս աշխարհի սուրբ մարմին եւ արիւն տեառն օգնական լեր ծառայիս Աստուծոյ, “Christ within the chalice of sacrifice, who takes away the sins of the world. Holy body and blood of the Lord, be helper to this servant of God,” also similar to that of Part 2. The third illustration is of the Crucifixion of Christ, very similar to the printed illustration in Part 3. The text below it reads: Խաչելութիւնն Քրիստոսի օգնական եւ պահապան եղիցի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ, “Let the Crucifixion of Christ be helper and guardian of this servant of God.”



²⁵⁶ This hmayil, which is approx. 91 feet long, appears to have been compiled from a number of different sources, including a version of the printed hmayil that is the subject of this study.

Other Hmayils

Fig. 20A. Portion the same handwritten hmayil with an illustration of the Sacrifice of Isaac, followed by intersecting diagonal texts, in a cross-hatched pattern, of the narrative of the Sacrifice of Isaac and the prayer for the intercession of the Divine Holy Signs of Christ, almost identical to that in Part 15. (See also notes 154 and 166 above.)

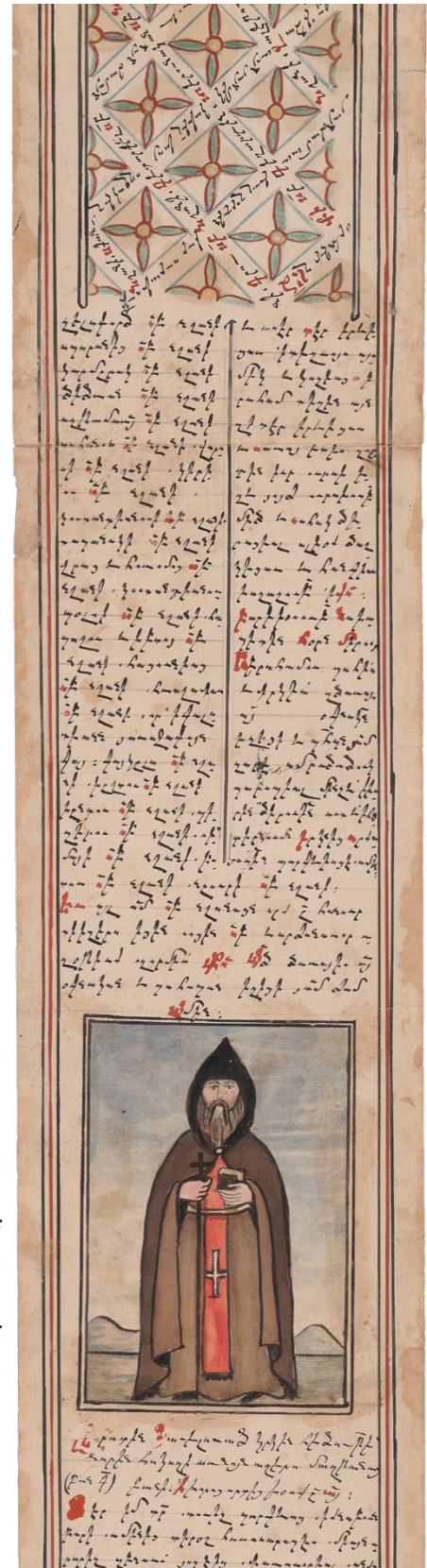
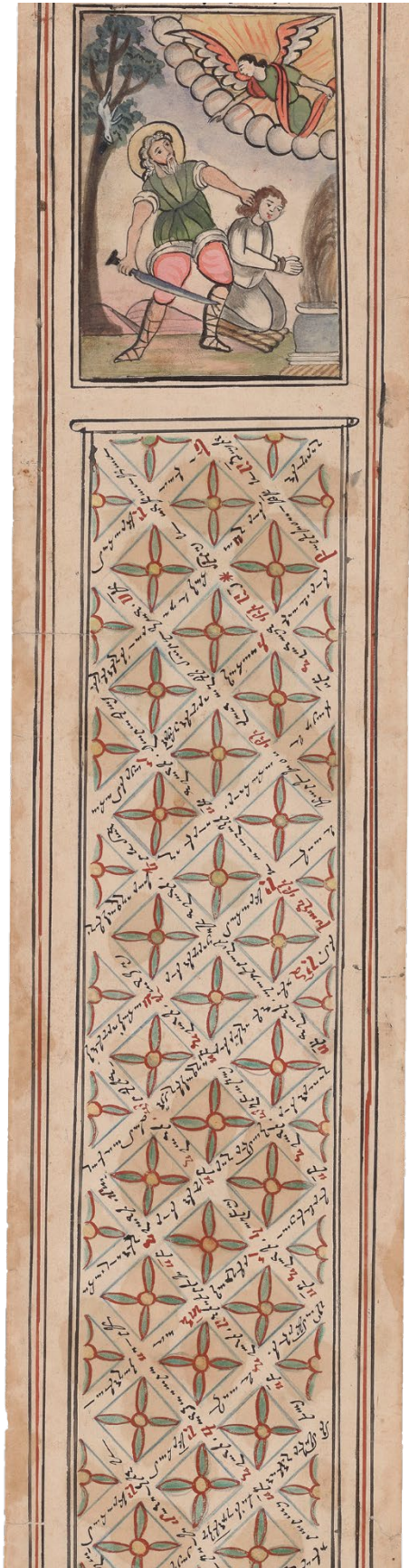


Fig. 20B. Continuation of the handwritten hmayil. Note that the intersecting diagonal texts continue into the two columns below at exactly the same point in the texts as in Part 15. After these texts is an illustration of St. Gregory of Narek, very similar to that of Part 16. The text that follows is Prayer 3 of his *Book of Lamentation*, rather than Prayer 41 as in Part 16.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ Elsewhere in the hmayil are portions of Prayers 6, 8, 18, 28, 32, 41, 43 and 94 of the *Book of Lamentation*.

Other Hmayils



Fig. 21. Portion of an 1803 handwritten hmayil in the possession of the Zohrab Information Center, with a passage from the Gospel of Matthew (9:27–38) in which Christ cures two men of their blindness, and casts out the demon that was possessing a mute man. The passage is followed by the addendum Այցելու և պահապան՝ եղիցի ծանախիս աստուծոյ յօհաննէսին, “Let [Christ] be visitor and guardian of this servant of God Yōhannes.” Note that the name is written in the same ink as that of the passage itself, which indicates that the hmayil was prepared specifically for him, rather than using a ready-made one in which his name was filled in later. (Photo Credit : J. S. Arlen, Zohrab Information Center.)

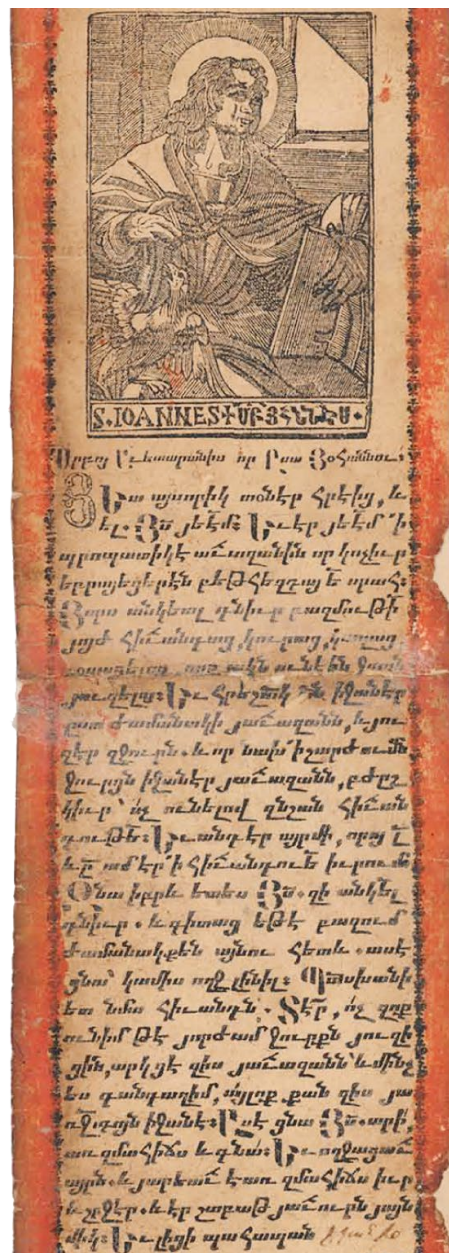


Fig. 22. Portion of a 1731 printed hmayil, colored only with an opaque red, with the same passage from the Gospel of John (5:1–9) as in Part 23. Note that “ST. JOHN” in the illustration is written in both Latin and Armenian characters: S. IOANNES + ՄԲՅՅՆՆԷՍ. The passage is followed by the addendum եւ լիցի պահապան եկանիս, “And let it be guardian [of] Ekanis.”

(Source: <http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsdl/collect/hmayilne/index/assoc/HASHf684.dir/14AH-1.pdf>, accessed 5 January 2022.)

Other Hmayils



Fig. 23. Portion of the same printed hmayil, with an illustration of an angel spearing a demon with a lance, next to another angel holding a sword and an orb. The title below the illustration reads: աղերս առ երկնային Ջօրսն, “Supplication to the Heavenly Hosts.”



Fig. 24. Portion a 1716 printed hmayil with the identical illustration as in Fig. 23,²⁵⁸ here colored with red, green, blue and brown. The same prayer follows the illustration, although the title is slightly different: Աղօթք զօրաւոր առ երկնային զօրսն, “Powerful prayer to the heavenly hosts.”

(Source: <http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/hmayilne/index/assoc/HASH0138.dir/13AH-1.pdf>, accessed 5 January 2022.)

²⁵⁸ Printing houses would often rent illustration woodcuts from another printer (Ghazaryan 2018: 70). See also note 9 above.

Other Hmayils



Fig. 26. Portion of the same printed hmayil with a colored the illustration of St. Sargis on horseback with his son Martiros. The title of the prayer that follows reads: Աղօթք առ սուրբ զինուորսն Բփսսն, “Prayer to the holy soldiers of Christ.” Note that the originally-named beneficiary of the prayer, կարապետին, “(of) Karapet”, has been stricken out and replaced by շահզատեին *ամեն*, “(of) Shahzatē amen”. The title of the next prayer reads: Աղօթք չար նազարի և չար լեզուի, “Prayer for the evil glance and evil tongue”, which is the same title as the first prayer in Part 13 above, although the prayer itself is different.

Fig. 25. Portion of the same printed hmayil with an illustration of St. Stephen the Protomartyr. In the illustration, the beardless St. Stephen is wearing deacons’ vestments and carrying a miniature church and a censer. To the left of the illustration, backing paper with printed text in Armenian is visible. Just after the illustration, repairs to the hmayil can be seen, in which a section of one hmayil, with uncolored illustrations, was spliced to a section of another hmayil, with colored illustrations. Below the illustration is the same “Supplication to Saint Stephen the Protomartyr” as in Part 8 above. Following this is a colored illustration and a “Supplication to Saint Gregory the Illuminator”, which differs from that in Part 9.



Other Hmayils



Fig. 27A. Portion of the same printed hmayil with a colored illustration of Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac, an angel stopping his sword strike and pointing to the ram hanging by its horns in a tree,²⁵⁹ and the servant with a donkey. The text that follows the illustration is the narrative of the sacrifice, similar to that in Part 15 above. It continues as the intersecting diagonal text in the cross-hatched section, first in one direction and then in the other. The narrative continues in the normal column that follows (see Fig. 27B below).

Fig. 27B. Continuation of the same printed hmayil, with the remainder of the Abraham and Isaac narrative. Following this is an illustration of a wreath-decorated Cross. The perpendicular text on the sides is a prayer for Christ to be guardian and visitor, Բարեխօսութեամբ և շնորհօք անբարբառ սրբոյ կենաց խաչափայտին Քրիստոսի սուրբ նշանին, “Through the intercession and grace of the holy life of the voiceless wood of the Cross of Christ [that is] the Holy Sign.” Although the language here resembles that of Part 15 above, it lacks the extensive list of specific divine Holy Signs, and it is not part of the cross-hatched section.

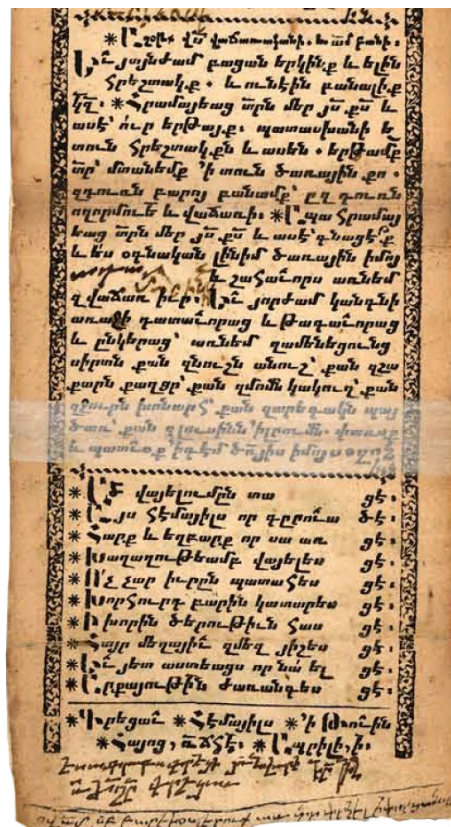


²⁵⁹ See note 157 above.



Fig. 29. The last part of a printed hmayil similar to the one that is the subject of this study, from which the missing text in the lacuna between Parts 27 and 28 was derived. According to the colophon, it was printed on April 20 in the year 1177 of the Armenian Era [= 1728 A.D.]. (Source: <http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/hmayilne/index/assoc/HASH3e23.dir/4AH-1.pdf>, accessed 5 January 2022.)

Fig. 28. Portion of the same printed hmayil with a colored illustration of an angel armed with a sword, bow and lance, confronting an *al* that holds the innards of its victim. The title of the prayer that follows reads: Աղօթք վասն թաղայի և ալի որ ոչ մերձենայ 'ի ծառայս աստուծոյ, "Prayer regarding *t'pgha* and *al* so that it does not come near this to servant of God". The hmayil closes with a brief printer's colophon, stating that it was printed in January in the year 1165 (ՌՃԿԵ) of the Armenian Era [= 1716 A.D.]. It then requests remembrance of the typesetter (շարող գրոյս) Nersēs, the inker (մրազարկ) Esayi, and the presser (տափազարկ) Akob the clerk, և որք յիշեք յիշեալ յիշիք յաւուրն այցելութեան ամեն, "and those you remember, let them be remembered on the day of [Christ's] visitation, amen." The colophon ends with the initial words of the Lord's Prayer: Հայր մեր որ յեր', "Our Father who [art] in hea..."



Song to Saint Sargis the General

Fifteen-Stanza Version²⁶⁰

Աղօթք Սրբոյն Սարգիսի Ջօրավարին
Եւ Որդւոյ Նորա Մարդիրոսին

Prayer of Saint Sargis the General
And His Son Martiros

Hmayil Version

Երգ առ սուրբ զօրավարն սարգիս:

Song to Saint Sargis the General.

1. Ո՛վ երջանիկ մեծ զօրական
Եւ Քրիստոսի յաղթող վրկայն,²⁶¹
Գլուխ զօրացըն Կոստանդեայն,²⁶²
Քաջ սպառազէն սուրբըդ Սարգիս:

Oh! happy great soldier,
And victorious witness²⁶¹ to Christ,
Leader of the army of Constantine,²⁶²
Well [and] fully armed, O Saint Sargis.

- Երջանիկըդ սուրբըդ սարգիս.
մեծ զօրական հայոց ազգիս.
'ի ժամ փորձման առ մե՛զ հասցիս.
քաջ սպառազէն սուրբըդ սարգիս:

O happy Saint Sargis,
Great soldier of this Armenian nation,
May you come to us in the hour of trial,
Well [and] fully armed, O Saint Sargis.

2. Ի օծելոյ ամբարըշտին,
Մոլորելոյն Յուլիանին,²⁶³
Չհանդուրժելով անօրինին,
Եղեր պարիսպ, սուրբըդ Սարգիս:

At the anointing of the ungodly [one],
Julian the Apostate,²⁶³
By not tolerating the law-breaker,
You became a rampart, O Saint Sargis.

3. Որ յարեւմուտս առաջ եկեալ²⁶⁴
Եւ յարեւելս եկեալ հասեալ²⁶⁵
Մեզ հասանել 'ի յօգնութիւն,
Ատենահաս սուրբըդ Սարգիս:

You who first came to the West,²⁶⁴
Also came to [and] arrived in the East,²⁶⁵

²⁶⁰ Feydit: 198–205 (Text ՏԱ–ԼԼ).

²⁶¹ վրկայն (*vĕkayn*), nom. վկայ (*vkay*), is used in the Armenian Bible to translate the Greek μάρτυς (*mártys*), “witness”. A person who dies for his or her belief in Christ as the Son of God is considered to have borne witness to, or testified about, that belief; thus *vkay* is sometimes rendered with that meaning as “martyr”.

²⁶² Emperor Constantine the Great (r. 306–337) appointed Sargis (Sergius) as *Stratelates* (στρατηλάτης, *master of the soldiers*) of the Roman forces in the region of Cappadocia, which bordered Armenia to the west.

²⁶³ “At the anointing of... Julian the Apostate”, that is, when he was anointed as Emperor. Julian the Apostate (r. 361–363) attempted to revert the Roman Empire to paganism, and in doing so persecuted Christians. See the next stanza and note 265 below.

²⁶⁴ That is, to Cappadocia.

²⁶⁵ When Julian the Apostate began to persecute Christians, Sargis left his position as *Stratelates* and went east

Song to Saint Sargis the General

Fifteen-Stanza Version

To come to us in aid,
Timely arriving, O Saint Sargis.

Hmayil Version

4. Երկունք աղեաց²⁶⁶ քո եւ ծընունդ
Եւ սիրամարգըն սիրասնունդ,²⁶⁷
Որդիդ սիրով հօրըդ գոլով,
Սուրբ Մարտիրոս ամբողջ մարմնով:

Pangs of your emotions²⁶⁶ and offspring,
And the peacock nourished lovingly,²⁶⁷
Being your son by the love of his father,
Saint Martiros with a perfect body.

5. Սիրով արքայն զձեզ ընկալեալ
Եւ մեծագոյն փառօք պատուեալ,
Մեծ զօրավիզ մեզ առաքեալ,
Ի Տաճրաստան պահակ եղեալ:²⁶⁸

With love the king received you
And honored [you] with greatest glory,
Great military support sent to us,
You became a guard in Tajikistan.²⁶⁸

Սիրով արքայս զձեզ ընկալեալ:
Եւ մեծագոյն փառօք պատուեալ:
մեծ զօրավիզ մեզ առաքեալ:
քաջ մարտընչող սուրբըդ սարգիս:

With love the king received you,
And honored [you] with greatest glory,
Great military support sent to us,
Bravely fighting, O Saint Sargis.

6. Մեծապայծառ Հըրաշք ցուցան
Յաւուր մեծի քո կատարման,²⁶⁹

to Armenia with his son Martiros, where he took refuge and served under king Tiran. See stanza 5 below.

²⁶⁶ աղեաց (*agheats'*), nom. աղիք (*aghik'*), literally “bowels” or “guts”, is used in the Armenian Bible to translate the Greek *έντερα* (*éntera*). As the bowels were regarded as the seat of emotion (by the Greeks as the seat of the more violent passions, and by the Hebrews as the seat of the more tender affections), *aghik'* is thus rendered figuratively as “emotions”. Cf. Gen. 43:30, Եւ խռովեցաւ Յովսէփ, եւ գալարէին աղիք նորա 'ի վերայ եղբօրն իւրոյ..., “And Joseph became unsettled, and was deeply emotional about (lit. ‘his bowels twisted over’) his brother...”; *KJV*: “And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother...”; *NRSV*: “With that, Joseph hurried out, because he was overcome with affection for his brother...”.

²⁶⁷ The imagery of a “peacock nourished lovingly” can be found in an ode (տաղ, *tagh*) by St. Nersēs Shnorhali, “To the Holy Virgin Hrip'simē” (Ի Սուրբ Կոյսն Հոփսիմէ):

Սիրասնունդ սիրամարգ սըխրալի,
Նըրբափայլ ոսկէթել տարփալի,
Եռապսակ իւղագլուխ ցանկալի,
Հրեշտակ հրաշագեղ Հոփսիմէ:

Wonderful peacock, nourished lovingly,
Desirable, delicately shining thread of gold,
Yearned-for, anointed with a triple crown,
Wondrously beautiful angel Hrip'simē.

(Տն. Ներսէսի Շնորհալու) Հայոց Կաթողիկոսի Բանք Չափաւ [*Poetic Writings of Lord Nersēs Shnorhali, Catholicos of Armenia*]. Venice: St. Ghazar, 1830, pp. 474–475 (in Armenian).)

²⁶⁸ That is, the land of the Tajiks, here referring to Sassanid Persia. Tajik or Tachik' (Տաճիք) was originally used to designate a certain Asiatic people, but later came to be used for Persians, Arabs, Turks or Muslims in general. After serving under king Tiran, Sargis was appointed by Emperor Shapur II to be commander of the Sassanid army.

Song to Saint Sargis the General

Fifteen-Stanza Version

Hmayil Version

Երկնից լուսոյն մեծի իջման
Եւ ձայն հայցման քո կատարման:²⁷⁰

Brilliant miracles were manifested
On the great day of your martyrdom,²⁶⁹
The descent of a great light from heaven,
And a voice of supplication for your martyrdom.²⁷⁰

7. Գեղեցկապէս տընօրինեալ,
Չայս Արարչին նախ սահմանեալ,
Մեծ զօրավիզ մեզ առաքեալ,
Արիացեալ սուրբըդ Սարգիս:
Beautifully stewarded,
The Creator had first established this.
Great military support sent to us,
Courageous, O Saint Sargis.

8. Երգենք ձայնիւ աղերսանօք
Եւ աղաչենք պաղատանօք
Մեզ հասանել միշտ յօգնութիւն,
Ատենահաս սուրբըդ Սարգիս:
We sing with a voice of imploration,
And beseech [you] with supplication,
To come to us always [in] aid,
Timely arriving, O Saint Sargis.

9. Ծունըր կըրկնենք սուրբ նըշանի
Եւ նըկարեալ քո պատկերի.
Մեզ ժամանեա՛ միշտ յատենի,
Ատենահաս սուրբըդ Սարգիս:
We bend [our] knee to the holy sign
And to your painted icon.
Reach us always in time,
Timely arriving, O Saint Sargis.

Ծունըր կըրկնենք սըրբոյ նշանիդ:
Եւ նըկարեալ քո պատկերիդ:
մեզ հասանիլ 'ի յօգնութիւն:
ատենահաս սուրբըդ սարգիս:

We bend [our] knee to your holy sign,
And to your painted icon.
To come to us in aid,
Timely arriving, O Saint Sargis.

10. Իսկ գերելոց այլասեռից
Որք 'ի կապանս են երկաթից,

Իսկ գերելոց յայլասեռից:
որք 'ի կապանսն են յերկաթից:

²⁶⁹ կատարման (*katarman*), nom. կատարումն (*katarumn*), “martyrdom”, literally “completion” or “perfection”. When Shapur later learned that Sargis was Christian, he ordered Martiros and Sargis to be executed.

²⁷⁰ In the tradition of the Armenian Church, at the moment of his martyrdom, St. Sargis prayed to God to help those who would perpetuate his memory and mention his name, and a voice from heaven answered him: “I will grant all your wishes” (Feydit: 201, n. 3). After his death, his body was illuminated by a light from heaven.

Song to Saint Sargis the General

Fifteen-Stanza Version

Հան ըզնոսա 'ի չար կապից,
Մեծ գերեհան, սուրբըդ Սարգիս:

But those taken captive [by] infidels,
Who are in fetters of iron,
Remove them from [their] evil bindings,
Great emancipator, O Saint Sargis.

Hmayil Version

հան ըզնոսա 'ի չար կապից:
մեծ գերեհան սուրբըդ սարգիս:

But those taken captive by infidels,
Who are in the fetters of iron,
Remove them from [their] evil bindings,
Great emancipator, O Saint Sargis.

11. Վըտանգելոց յախտից ցաւոց²⁷¹

Եւ 'ի վիրաց տաժանելոց,
Դու լեր նոցին դեղ սպեղանիս,
Հերքող ցաւոց սուրբըդ Սարգիս:

For those endangered by diseases of *ts'aws*,²⁷¹
And those tormented by wounds,
Be for them a healing salve,
Repulser of *ts'aws*, O Saint Sargis.

12. Այլ եւ անձանց ուղեւորաց

Ի ճանապարհ հեռագընաց,
Լեր ուղեկից նոցին շաւղաց,
Երազ վարժիչ,²⁷² սուրբըդ Սարգիս:

Moreover for people traveling
On roads far away,
Be a companion [on] their paths,
Swift instructor,²⁷² O Saint Sargis.

13. Իսկ 'ի յամպոց վնասակարաց

Եւ 'ի տօթոյ խիստ խորշակաց,
Դու լեր նոցին յետ դարձուցիչ,
Ատենահաս սուրբըդ Սարգիս:

But for the noxious clouds
And the scorching heat of the fiercely parching wind,
Be the one who turns those [things] back,
Timely arriving, O Saint Sargis.

²⁷¹ Variants of this song to Saint Sargis the General can be found in nine of the twenty-seven complete or incomplete hmayil manuscripts reviewed by Frédéric Feydit for his *Amulettes de l'Arménie chrétienne*, and this particular stanza is present in only one of them (Feydit: 21–75; 202, n. 3).

With regard to *ts'aws* as evil spirits of disease, see note 126 above.

²⁷² The contextual meaning of երազ վարժիչ (*erag varzhich'*), “swift instructor”, is uncertain, as Feydit likewise indicated in his French rendering of this phrase as “instructeur rapide (?)” (Feydit: 203).

Song to Saint Sargis the General

Fifteen-Stanza Version

Hmayil Version

14. Սուրբըդ Սարգիս 'ի մեզ գթած,
Մատո՛ղ ըզձայն մեր մաղթանաց
Առ ողորմած Քրիստոս Աստուած
Այն որ օրհնեալ է իւր արարածս:²⁷³
- O Saint Sargis, [be] merciful to us,
Bring forward the voice of our prayers
To merciful Christ God,
That [one] who blesses his creatures.²⁷³
15. Հօրըն Լուսոյ միշտ մաղթեցէք,
ԶՈրդին Աստուած աղաչեցէք,
Ի բանսարկուէն²⁷⁴ զմեզ թափեցէք,
Լէր օգնական, սուրբըդ Սարգիս:
- Always pray [to] the Father of Light,
Beseech God the Son,
Extract us from the slanderer,²⁷⁴
Be helper, O Saint Sargis.

²⁷³ The text in Feydit reads [q]արարածս, “creatures” (corrected with a definite object prefix), and notes manuscript variants of արարած, “creature”, զարարած, “creature” (definite object), and իւր արարածս, “his creatures” (Feydit: 204, n. 4). We prefer the third variant.

²⁷⁴ բանսարկուէն (*bansarkuēn*), nom. բանսարկու (*bansarku*), “slanderer”, is occasionally used in the Armenian Bible to translate the Greek διάβολος (*diabolos*), the source word of English “devil”. (διάβολος was used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew יָצָן [*śāṭān*], “adversary”, with the related Aramaic form *sāṭānā* translated into Armenian as սատանայ [*satanay*], “satan”.)

Prayer regarding *t'pgha* and *al*²⁷⁵

Աղօթք վասն թաղայի եւ ալի (FF)

Սուրբն Պետրոս եւ սուրբն Պօղոս եւ սուրբն Մինաս եւ սուրբն Շեղաթ գնացին ճանապարհաւ եւ տեսին այր մի նստեալ 'ի վերայ աւագոյ եւ մագն նորա իբրեւ ձար ձիոյ եւ ըղունկն նորա պղնձի, աչք նորա ապակի, ատամունք նորա երկաթի եւ ժանիքն նորա որպէս վարագի խոզի, լինդքն այլակերպք քան զամենայն կենդանեաց եւ ատամունք յետոյ եւ պոկունքն առաջի, թաթ ոտիցն²⁷⁶ յետոյ եւ կրունկն առաջի: Հարցին ցնա սուրբքն եւ ասէն. Չի՞նչ ես դու պեղծ դժնիկ կամ զի՞նչ գործոց գործակալ ես դու²⁷⁷ կամ զի՞նչ է անունդ քո: Ստոյգ խոստովանեա մեզ: (FF)

Saint Peter, Saint Paul, Saint Minas and Saint Sheghat' walked along a road and saw a man sitting on the sand, and his hair [was] like the mane of a horse, his claw[s] [like] copper, his eyes [like] glass, his teeth [like] iron and his tusks like [those of] wild boar swine, the gums [were] of a different kind than [those of] all living things, and the teeth [were] backwards and the lips forward, the toes²⁷⁶ [were] backward and the heel forward. The saints asked him and said, "What are you, foul thorn bush? or what deeds are you orchestrating?²⁷⁷ or what is your name? Truly confess to us."

Ասէ պեղծն. Ես եմ մայրն ամենայն չարեաց, ես եմ ալն չար որ նստիմ 'ի վերայ տղացկանի, զաչսն խաւարեցուցանեմ, զականջն խլացուցանեմ, զմարմինն թմրեցուցանեմ, զղասապն²⁷⁸ քարշեմ եւ խեղդեմ զմայրն եւ զմանուկն: Մեր կերակուրն մանր տղայոց միսն է եւ տղացկանի դասապն: Խեղդեմ Չէ ամսական տղայն յորովայնի մօր իւրոյ, գողանամք, խուլ եւ մունջ առնեմք եւ տանիմք առ թագաւորն մեր յանդունդս եւ նա մեծարէ զմեզ: Չտղայն 'ի յօրօրոցն խեղդեմք, զտղացկանն 'ի յանկողինն, զմանուկն 'ի տաշտին. Ռք հազարաց եմք եւ մեր թագաւորն սաթայ հելն²⁷⁹ է: Եւ ոչ թողումք որ տղայն 'ի փեսայութիւն մտանէ²⁸⁰ եւ ոչ աղջիկն 'ի հարսնութիւն:²⁸¹ Եւ մեր բնակութիւնն յանկիւնս տանն է եւ յախոռն է եւ դրան ետեւն է եւ աղբրեզերն է. զանասունն եւ զամենայն չորքոտանիք ոչ թողումք որ աճին. զոմանս քամոտ առնեմք եւ զոմանս չըռաթափ: Ահա՛, ասացի զամենայն. ով սուրբքդ Աստուծոյ, մի՛ տանջեք զիս:²⁸² (FF)

The foul [one] said, "I am the mother of all evils, I am the evil *al* who sits on a pregnant woman. I darken the eyes, deafen the ear[s], [and] benumb the flesh. I pull out the liver²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ In the corpus of incantations against the demons *t'pgha* and *al*, there are a number of similar narratives with varying amounts of detail regarding the appearance of the demons, their malevolent deeds, and the means by which they are controlled. In order to provide a more-complete narrative, this prayer combines portions of texts from Feydit: 306–313 (Text ԸԺԶ–CXVI), and Harutyunyan: 131 (Text 1(159)դ). The specific source (FF or SH) is noted after each paragraph. Text corrections in brackets are as indicated in these sources.

²⁷⁶ թաթ ոտիցն (*t'at' otits'n*), "toes", literally "paw of the feet".

²⁷⁷ զի՞նչ գործոց գործակալ ես դու (*zi'nch' gortsots' gortsakal es du*), "what deeds are you orchestrating?", literally "what deeds are you the agent/director/leader of?"

²⁷⁸ զղասապն (*zghasapn*), nom. դասապ (*ghasap*), literally "butcher", was borrowed into Middle Armenian from Arabic *qassab* (*MHB*, s.v. դասապ). The word *ghasap* is glossed by Ghevont Alishan as լեարդ (*leard*), "liver" (Alishan: 242). One variant of this incantation reads ճիկար (*chikar*), "liver" or "lungs" (Feydit: 308, n. 12).

and strangle the mother and the baby. Our food is the flesh of small children and the liver of a pregnant woman. I strangle the six- to seven-month-[old] child in the womb of its mother. We steal [it], make [it] deaf and dumb and bring [it] to our king in the abyss, and he honors us. We strangle the child in the cradle, the pregnant woman in the bed, [and] the baby in the [bath] basin. We are thousands of thousands and our king is Sathael.²⁷⁹ And we do not allow that the boy becomes a groom²⁸⁰ nor the girl a bride.²⁸¹ And our dwelling is in the corners of the house, in the stable, behind the door, and [at] the edge of the spring. We do not allow the animal[s] and all quadrupeds to multiply; we make them arthritic and impotent. Behold, I [have] said all. Oh saints of God, do not torment me.”²⁸²

Յայնժամ հանին սուրբքն Աստուծոյ զսուրն հրեղեն²⁸³ և նոցա չարչարէին և ասէին. Երդմնեցուցանենք զքեզ,²⁸⁴ չար դւք,²⁸⁵ զՀայր և զՈրդին և զսուրբ Հոգին և միածին Աստուած կենդանին և ածեն[ք] 'ի վերայ ձեր անողորմ հրեշտակքն բազում: (SH)

Then the saints of God drew the fiery sword,²⁸³ tormented them and said, “We make you

²⁷⁹ սաթայ հէլն (*sat'ay hēln*) = սաթայէլն (*sat'ayēln*), “Sathael” or “Satael”, a fallen angel in some traditions.

²⁸⁰ 'ի փեսայութիւն մտանէ (*i p'esayut'iwn mtanē*) “becomes a groom”, literally “enters into groomship”.

²⁸¹ 'ի հարսնութիւն (*i harsnut'iwn*), “a bride”, literally “into brideship”.

²⁸² This incantation is an example of the Armenian version of a demon-binding amulet or incantation narrative, which goes back to late antiquity and has been labeled by scholars of folklore as the “Sisinnius Legend.” Versions of this legend are known in a number of other traditions, including Aramaic, Jewish, Coptic, Arabic, Ethiopian, Classical Syriac, Byzantine Greek, Modern Greek, South Slavic (Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian), Romanian and East Slavic (Russian, Ukrainian). The designation “Sisinnius Legend” is based on one of the Byzantine Greek versions of the narrative, in which St. Sisinnius confronts a female demon that has stolen and killed the children of his sister. (The widespread tradition of the demon that snatches, kills, and/or eats babies, goes back to the ancient Mesopotamian demons Dimme and Lamashtu of the second to third millennium B.C.) In the Armenian version of the Sisinnius Legend, the female demon is the *al*, or the mother of the *al* in the narratives in which her offspring are characters. In one of the Jewish versions, the demon is Lilith, the first wife of Adam, who is confronted by the triad of angels Senoy, Sasanoy, and Semangelof. Since the narrative source from which the Armenian tradition developed did not include these angels or St. Sisinnius, the names of the triad of saints were usually changed to familiar ones, which often included St. Peter and St. Paul, and additional saints were sometimes added to the triad. (Toporkov: *passim*.) The names of the five angels in the narrative of the hmayil (Part 26) are Sion, Sisi, Sisianus, Noviel, and Taziel, with the first three resembling two of the Jewish triad of angels and the Byzantine St. Sisinnius.

Sisinnius Legend incantations are a type of “Encounter Charm” (Ger. *Begegnungssegen*), as defined by the Danish folklorist Ferdinand Ohrt (1873–1938), which are composed of three parts: an introduction, a dialogue, and a conclusion. Ohrt noted that the various types of Encounter Charms had certain aspects in common: a description of the meeting of two or more characters, and interaction between the characters which changes the situation for the better. In the Sisinnius Legend, the characteristics of the Encounter Charm are (1) a sacred character meets an evil spirit, demon or personified disease; (2) the sacred character has a dialogue with it; and (3) the sacred character binds it or drives it away. (Toporkov: 14–15, 87, citing Ohrt in Hoffmann-Kraye, ed., *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* [*Concise Dictionary of German Superstition*], Berlin: De Gruyter, 1936, Vol. 7, pp. 1582–1620.)

²⁸³ The fiery sword wielded by the saints is presumably that of the archangel Michael. Scholars of folklore have categorized the traditions of the Sisinnius Legend into two types, the Sisinnius-Melinite-type and the Michael-type, based on similar elements of the incantation narratives. The designation Michael-type is based on one of the Byzantine Greek versions of the narrative, in which the archangel Michael confronts the female demon. The Armenian tradition of the Sisinnius Legend has been classified as Michael-type, although the archangel himself does not appear in the narratives, having been replaced by various saints during the transmission of the narrative

swear,²⁸⁴ evil demons,²⁸⁵ [to] the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and [to] the Only-begotten living God, and we bring over you numerous merciless angels.”

Եւ ասէ մայրն ալին. Մի՛ չարչարէք զանդրանիկն իմ, զի մեք երդնումք 'ի ձեզ Աստուածն կենդանի և 'ի կաթն սուրբ կուսին Մարիամու, 'ի քնարն Դաւթի, Դավետարանչացն, ԻԴ մարգարէիցն, 'ի տախտակն Մովսէսի, 'ի բլենոն Քրիստոսի, 'ի մատանին Սողոմոնի.²⁸⁶ յոր տուն սոքայ անուանքն լինի[ն] կամ յիշուի[ն] կամ գրած լինի[ն] անդ, ոչ մտանեմք 'ի յայն կին և զմանուկն ոչ զօղանամք և ոչ առնումք պակաս: Եւ անուանքն մեր այս են. յառաջինն Ծնելոց, Բ. Աղլազո, Գ. Մայրոյէ, Դ. Աղքատէ, Ե. Այսմէ, Զ. Այսզին, Է. Մարմարոյէ, Ը. Այրոյ, Թ. Կալիշի, Ժ. Յուլիցայ, ԺԱ. Եկիտուն, ԺԲ. Անկանես: Ուր այս բանքս լինի և անուաքն սրբոց լինի[ն]՝ հալածիմք 'ի սահմանաց դիւացն և փարատեմք զգաւս և բժշկեմք զգաւս ընդդէմ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ տիրացու Գրիգորին այս անունն:²⁸⁷ (SH)

And the mother of the *al* said, “Do not torment my first-born, for we swear to you, Living God, and on the Milk of the holy Virgin Mary, on the Harp of David, to the Four Evangelists, to the Twenty-Four Prophets, on the Tablet[s] of Moses, on the Nail[s] of Christ, [and] on the Ring of Solomon²⁸⁶—in that house [where] these names are, or are remembered, or are written there, we do not enter into that woman nor steal the baby nor diminish [them]. And these are our names: the first, *Tsnelots'*, [then] 2. *Aghlazo*, 3. *Mayroyē*, 4. *Aght'atē*, 5. *Aysmē*, 6. *Ayszin*, 7. *Marmaroyē*, 8. *Ayroy*, 9. *Kalishi*, 10. *Yulits'ay*, 11. *Ekitun*, [and] 12. *Ankanes*. Where these words are and the names of the Saints are, we are expelled to the regions of demons, and we disperse the *ts'aws* and heal the *ts'aws* against this servant of God [before] *tirats'u* Grigor [who is] (*name*).”²⁸⁷

into the Armenian tradition. (Toporkov: 13–14, 775–780.)

²⁸⁴ Երդմնեցուցանեմք զքեզ (*Erdmnets'uts'anemk' zk'ez*), “We make you swear”. The verb երդմնեցուցանեմ (*erdmnets'uts'anem*), from երդմնեմ (*erdmnem*), “swear an oath” (< երդումն (*erdumn*), ‘oath’) and ցուցանեմ, “show, demonstrate” (in a causative sense as a component of another verb), can also be rendered “adjure”, from Latin *ad*, “to” and *jurare*, “swear” (< *jus/jur-*, ‘oath’). See also note 287 below in regard to the demons’ oath or promise as a narrative element in Sisinnius Legend incantations.

²⁸⁵ The narrative began with the saints encountering a single *al*. Now they are tormenting more than one, and in the next sentence, the mother of the *al* is present.

²⁸⁶ See note 228 above in regard to the Ring of Solomon and the *Testament of Solomon*. One episode in the *Testament of Solomon*, involving Solomon’s encounter, dialogue with, and binding of the demon Abizuth (Obizu), is believed to be the source of the Michael-type narratives of the Sisinnius Legend, which was transmitted into one of the Byzantine Greek versions of the legend, and thence into the Armenian tradition. (Toporkov: 76–86, 775–780.)

²⁸⁷ “And the mother of the *al* said, ‘Do not torment my first-born, for we swear to you... in that house [where] these names are, or are remembered, or are written there, we do not enter into that woman nor steal the baby nor diminish [them].’” Two narrative elements that are common to most traditions of the Sisinnius Legend are: (1) the female demon pleading with the angel saints for her life and/or the lives of her offspring, and (2) the demon promising to stay away from, and not harm anyone in, the place in which the names of the demons and/or angel saints are spoken, written and/or remembered. (Toporkov: *passim*.) In the Armenian tradition, the oath to stay away is usually forced upon the demon, either by the indirect threat of the confrontation, or by a direct “we make you swear” threat from the angel saints, often at the point of the fiery sword. The demon’s oath is usually sworn

Կապեն գքեզ արն չար 'ի մէջ աւազանին.²⁸⁸ Կապեն ['ի վերայ] խաչին, քաջ,²⁸⁹ որ ոչ 'ի մայրն մտանես եւ կորուսանես եւ ոչ 'ի տղան . . . : Կապեն գքեզ քաջ 'ի հայր եւ [յ]որդին եւ 'ի սուրբ հոգին: Հաւատամ 'ի Հայր, [յ]որդին որ ընդ աջմէ Հօրն, Տէր մեր Յիսուս Քրիստոս յերկինս համբարձեալ սուրբ մարմնով: Գ խաչեր կանգու[ն]ք կային.²⁹⁰ խաչեցին մէկն, զդուռն փակեցին. այն խաչն սուին էր 'ի մարտի.²⁹¹ ան պահապան ծննդկանիս որ ոչ վնասի մինչ 'ի գալուստն Քրիստոսի: Յանուն Հօր եւ Որդոյ եւ Հոգւոյն սրբոյ: Ծառայիս Աստուծոյ. Ամէն: (FF)

“I bind you, evil *al*, within the Font,²⁸⁸ I bind you on the Cross, *k'aj*,²⁸⁹ that you do not enter into and destroy the mother or the child (*name*). I bind you, *k'aj*, in [the name of] the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. I believe in the Father, [and] in the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who at the right hand of the Father ascended to heaven with [his] holy body. Three upright crosses stood²⁹⁰—they crucified the One, [and] shut the door. That Cross was a lance in battle.²⁹¹ It [is] a guardian of this woman giving birth, that no harm [will come to her] until the coming of Christ. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For this servant of God. Amen.”

on or to various sacred objects and persons, which gives it strength and makes it more difficult for the demon to break.

“And these are our names. ... Where these words are and the names of the Saints are, we are expelled... and we disperse... and heal...” Another narrative element often seen in some traditions of the Sisinnius Legend, part and parcel of the oath, is the disclosure of names by the demon (*ibid.*). In revealing the demons’ names, their magical power is transferred to the angel saints, who use this power, and that of their own names, to bind or expel the demons. The tradition of protection afforded by the demons’ names dates back to ancient Mesopotamia: “The mesopotamian rituals against Lamashtu specifically prescribe that Lamashtu’s seven names be written on a cylinder seal of clay to be worn on the body, and in fact incantations concerning her names are a persistent feature of the actual amulets.” (Wiggermann: 230.)

²⁸⁸ աւազանին (*awazanin*), nom. աւազան (*awazan*), “Font”, can also be rendered “basin”, “pool”, “reservoir” or other words related to the containment of water. Based on the following phrase “I bind you on the Cross”, we chose to render *awazan* as “(baptismal) Font”.

Among the blessings provided by the sacrament of Baptism is the exorcism of evil. Here, the holy power of the Font and its sanctified waters are used in an entirely different manner: to contain the *al* within it and prevent it from harming the mother and child.

²⁸⁹ In Armenian folk belief, a *k'aj* (քաջ) is a human-like creature who lives in mountain caves, crevasses, and deep valleys, and is the husband-counterpart of the water-nymph known as a *p'eri* (փերի). Among the various malevolent deeds for which they are known, *k'ajs* steal beautiful, healthy babies from unprotected cradles, and substitute their own ugly, sickly babies, which usually do not survive. (Abeghyan: 104–110.)

²⁹⁰ Reading կար in the text as կայր, and correcting it to plural կային (*kayin*), “(they) stood”.

²⁹¹ The three crosses are the ones upon which Christ and the two thieves were crucified (Luke 23:32–43). Through the Crucifixion of Christ (the One), the door(s) to evil and death were shut—good prevailed over evil, and life prevailed over death. “That Cross”, that is, the Cross upon which the One was crucified, was a weapon which helped Christian forces to be victorious in battle. Here, it is a weapon in the battle against demons, by which the door to their imprisonment is shut.

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Abbreviations

- KJV* = *The Holy Bible: King James Version*. Cambridge Edition: 1769.
- MH* = *Matenagirk' Hayots'* (Մատենագիրք Հայոց) [*Armenian Classical Authors*]. Antelias/Erevan: 2003–.
- MHB* = *Mijin hayereni baṛaran* (Միջին հայերենի բառարան) [*Dictionary of Middle Armenian*], edited by Ruben Ghazaryan and Henrik Avetisyan. Yerevan: Yerevan State University Publishing House, 2009.
- NBHL* = *Nor baṛgirk' haykazean lezui* (Նոր բառգիրք հայկազեան լեզուի) [*New Dictionary of the Armenian Language*], edited by Gabriël Awetik'ean, Khach'atur Siwrmēlean, and Mkrtich' Awgerean. Venice: St. Ghazar, 1836–37.
- NRSV* = *The Holy Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments: New Revised Standard Version*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1989.

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